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UNITED STATES NAVY

WAR DIARY
OF
ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA

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1 OCTOBER, 1943 - 31 OCTOBER, 1943
PG NUMBERS 31541 - 31542

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WAR DIARY

OF

ADMIR L. BLACK USN

1 - 31 October 1943

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[redacted]
SECURITY INFORMATION

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WAR DIARY

of

Admiral, Black Sea

Commanding Admiral: Vice-Admiral K i e s e r i t z k y

Chief of Staff: Captain v o n C o n r a d y

1 October - 15 October 1943
16 October - 31 October 1943

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
Naval History Division
Washington 25, D.C.

Editorial Note:

The translation of this German War Diary was made in London, England, under the guidance of Commander G. A. Saunders, USNR. When his London office was closed and the translation project was discontinued, much unfinished material was sent to Naval History Division, (OP-29).

Because the dissemination of the data contained in these documents is important, the translations and stencils have not been checked for accuracy of interpretation, phraseology, and spelling of officers' names or geographical names. Distribution under these conditions seems justified because of the excellent reputation of the London personnel and because translators are not available in Naval History Division. Research to correct possible inconsistencies did not warrant the time involved.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
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Washington 25, D. C.

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1 October 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

The Air Force reported that no enemy vessels were sighted in the Black Sea during the day. A motor gunboat, course southeast, was seen in the Sea of Azov south of Kamyshevatka at 0720.

Ships in harbor: Ssaki: 40 boats; Primorsko: 2 motor gunboats, 3 coastal vessels and 50 boats; Yeisk: 1 motor gunboat, 2 coastal vessels and 60 boats.

Anapa: On account of clouds only view in parts. Observed 1 small armed vessel, 4 landing craft personnel and 3 small boats. In addition to that 3 motor minesweepers, course west, south of Anapa.

Novorossisk: 4 boats and 1 small motor boat. In the bay another small motor boat, course southeast.

In the afternoon 2 M.T.B.s, course west, were stated off the harbor entrance to Ghelenjik, and near Cape Utrich 1 dump barge with lighter of 300 tons and 4 escort vessels, course northwest. Furthermore 2 M.T.B.s, course west, 10 miles south of Novorossisk.

After a break of 3 months and after 2 planes of type Ju 188 had been brought up the vessels in Poti harbor and in the Chobi estuary were stated again for the first time. With this a repeated request of the Admiral, Black Sea and the presupposition for the judgment of the enemy situation in the Black Sea has been fulfilled.

The evaluation of the aerial photograph had the following result: Poti: 1 battleship, 1 heavy cruiser, 2 destroyers, 1 of them in the dock, 6 submarines, 3 of them in the dock, 7 motor minesweepers, 1 cruiser (new construction, hull), 2 floating cranes, 2 floating docks, 30 boats and launches, 1 passenger ship (accommodation ship for submarine crews) of 8,500 tons; 1 freighter of 6,000 tons (newly appeared), 3 freighters of 4,000 tons each, 2 freighters of 3,500 tons each, 1 of them in the dock, 2 freighters of 1,500 tons each, 3 freighters of 1,000 tons each and 4 freighters of 800 tons each, and 22 coastal vessels with altogether 10,500 tons. In sight of the harbor 1 submarine chaser, course southeast, 1 motor boat and 2 M.T.B.s.

Chobi estuary: (partly under clouds) 1 cruiser hull, 1 hull, apparently of a destroyer, 1 minesweeper, 2 submarines, 3 M.T.B.s, 2 escort vessels, 1 tanker of 7,000 tons, 1 freighter of 4,000 tons, 1 freighter of 2,500 tons, 3 freighters of 1,500 tons each, 3 freighters of 1,000 tons each and 4 coastal vessels totaling 2,400 tons; furthermore 1 paddle steamer and 1 floating battery. Breakwater unchanged.

Ochemchiri: 3 submarines and 6 motor minesweepers, 4 of them on slip, 1 submarine tender of 1,000 tons and another one of 2,000 tons, 1 coastal vessel and 15 boats.

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The Main Naval D/F Station reported moderate movements of small vessels in the eastern Black Sea. 9 submarines were inferred to be at sea: 5 of them in the northwestern Black Sea to the southwest of the Crimea, 3 in the southwestern Black Sea and 1 in the eastern Black Sea, probably on her return passage.

Concerning the army situation on the Gotenkopf it was reported that the enemy attempted to harass our own withdrawal by heavy harassing fire and ensuing attacks.

Own Situation:

During the night of 30 September/1 October the 1st E-boat flotilla was with 4 boats in the patrol line near the southern entrance to the Kerch-Strait but did not see anything, and put in again to Ivan Baba at 0600.

The patrol line on the northern and southern Taman coast was carried out without seeing or contacting the enemy. From 0400 until 0410 the patrol line southern Taman coast was fired at with rifles and machine guns from our own coast.

From the patrol line east of Genichesk nothing to report.

Genichesk, at 0530: Naval Shore Commander Ukraine reported that by reason of enemy news the Army reckoned with landings on the isthmus of Arabat off Chokrak. It was ordered therefore that the patrol line east of Genichesk with 2 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 naval ferry barges was shifted to the south between Ostrov-Dirjuchi and 45° 50' north.

Simferopol, at 0930. I am going to Kerch and the Kuban brid ehead so that on the very spot I can give my orders for the next days and can discuss and arrange the last measures for the end-phase of the "Brunhild" operation and the withdrawal of the tonnage.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Light variable wind, during the day sea wind, fair, visibility 8 to 10 miles, fog patches in the morning hours.

Orders for the night of 1/2 October:

The motor minesweepers R 35, R 166, R 197 and R 203 will be in the patrol line south entrance to Kerch Strait;

5 naval ferry barges Taman south coast off Shelyesni-Rog;

2 naval landing craft (guns) and 7 naval ferry barges Taman north coast;

2 naval landing craft (guns), 1 naval ferry barge, R.B. 02 and R.B. 03 east of Ostrov-Dirjuchi;

2 naval landing craft (guns) No.4 and 2 naval ferry barges between Ostrov-Dirjuchi and 45° 45' north close to the Arabat isthmus.

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Details concerning the patrol line just like on the previous days. With regard to the reports concerning planned enemy landings on the Arabat isthmus off Chakrak the Naval Shore Commander Ukraine is ordered until further notice to occupy the patrol line every day as ordered above from night-fall until daybreak.

On account of the statements made by air reconnaissance concerning the greater number of vessels in Anapa the 1st E-Boat Flotilla is ordered to operate with 3 boats in cooperation with night reconnaissance planes against enemy vessels in Anapa roads and close to the coast between Anapa and Cape Utrich during the night of 1/2 October. The latitude of Cape Utrich must not be passed.

The 1st E-Boat Flotilla is informed of the operations of the patrol lines and of the U-boats operating between Cape Utrich and Oseraika.

Since it must be reckoned with enemy landings on the Arabat isthmus the Air Force will fly increased reconnaissance in the northwestern Sea of Azov and will attack with bombs all vessels which will not reply to the demand of recognition signals. Naval Shore Commanders Ukraine and Caucasus are ordered therefore to have all civilian vessels principally escorted on the route Genichesk - Kerch by naval vessels. Admiral, Black Sea, with copy to 1st Air Corps, Kerch and Commander, Naval Air, Simferopol are to be timely informed of movements of our own vessels. All vessels, including transport cutters and fishing vessels, are to be marked by swastika flags on wheel-house or on deck. Fishing in the waters released for this purpose is immediately prohibited during darkness in order to exclude espionage and agent activity. Fishing in the released areas during daytime is to be strictly controled.

Varna at 1225: Chief of the 7th Landing Flotilla reported that the 1st Group with naval ferry barges F 579, F 580, F 584, F 591, F 592 and F 593 have been comissioned.

In conference with the Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus I settled the disposition of outposts for the operation "Brunhild": The patrol line of the Taman north coast will act from 1 October according to the movements of the troops the state of which will be reported in time with code word by radio message of the Naval Liaison Officer with the 49th Army Corps to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus and the boats in question. During the night the patrol line stretches as far as our own front line, during the day in case the patrol forces are fired at by enemy artillery from the land, the patrol line may be withdrawn.

With every withdrawal of the patrol line corresponding with the movement of our troops a longitudinal to the west is connected ultimately as far as Cape Litvina. With the shortening of the north Taman front the naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 1 and 11 and 2 naval ferry barges will be free probably from 3 October so that afterwards the patrol line will only be occupied by 5 naval ferry barges.

[illegible]

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The total withdrawal of the patrol line from the Taman north coast will be done by special order. Simultaneously the route for the return passage will be ordered. It is planned to employ the naval ferry barges of the patrol line Taman north coast as security of the northern entrance to the Kerch Strait on the line Iljich-Cape Varsovska close to the northern boundary of the area where vessels are forbidden to cast anchor.

Probably from 3 October a patrol line southeast of Kossa Chushka in a length of 6 miles will be occupied by 5 naval ferry barges which in hazy weather and artificial fog will stay there also during the day. Also from 3 October a patrol line with 2 naval landing craft (guns) and of boats of the harbor defense flotilla Kerch will be laid out along the northern coast of Ssennaja bay to the east beginning at Cape Kubanov. The task of this patrol line is to prevent enemy crossing attempts from the southern to the northern Taman peninsula.

The present patrol line close to the Taman south coast from Shcljesni Bag to Yorki-Liman will probably be shifted to the line Brown 18 as far as 5 miles west of Brown 18 and occupied by 3 naval ferry barges and 2 miles to both sides of Brown 17 by 2 naval ferry barges in order to secure the southern entrance to Kerch Strait. During the day these naval ferry barges will stay camouflaged close to the land near Janysh-Takil.

Genichesk at 1300: The naval ferry barges 493 and 303 and the naval craft (guns) 3 and 10 put in from the patrol line. Nothing to report.

Kerch at 1405: The naval ferry barges 467 and 132 put in from the patrol line Taman south coast.

The motor minesweepers R 35, R 166 and R 197 put out from Theososia at 1710 to the patrol line south entrance to Kerch Strait. The naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 3 and 9, the naval ferry barge 303 and RA 02 and RA 03 put out from Genichesk at 1800 to the patrol line.

3 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba at 1830.

Extension and boundaries of the danger area near the northern entrance to Kerch Strait is reported to the authorities in question.

U-Boat Situation:

U-Boat U 9 is ordered to put out on 2 October. On account of the shorter route and on account of possible enemy actions in these last days of the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead U 9 will proceed via the northern route, zone Caesar and Dora. The operational area will be decided after receipt of situation report and according to it.

The boats will be informed of the new front line on the coast. U 20 is informed of the operations of our own E-boats and ordered to keep aside from the operational area of the E-boats.

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Enemy Air Activity:

Naval Shore Commander Ukraine reported additionally that 2 further killed men of the harbor defense flotilla were salvaged in the air attacks on 29 September.

Air attacks on Genichesk with numerous bombs on town and harbor site took place on 30 September at 1155 and 1340 and on 1 October at 1330 and 1520. No naval damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

From the routine minesweeping in Danube and Kerch Strait nothing to report; no success.

Shipping traffic from Odessa to Ochakov has been reopened.

Supply Traffic:

a) Routine crossing traffic in the Kerch Strait. The last transports from Taman are running in the forenoon of 2 October. From 27 September until 30 September the following transportations were performed:

1.) Total by Navy and pioneers:

14,390 tons of service property of all kinds, 31,362 German soldiers, Allied and voluntary assistants, 1,204 wounded men, 406 civilians, 3,554 motor vehicles, 3,959 animal drawn vehicles, 400 guns, 10,894 horses, 1,223 cattle, 25 tanks.

2.) By Navy alone:

10,082 tons of supply goods,
208 soldiers, 741 wounded men, 14 motor vehicles, 3 guns.

b) Naval landing craft (guns) No. 4, naval ferry barges 493 and 575, 4 fishing cutters, WM 2229, MAR 3, 7 and 11 put out from Genichesk to Kerch at 1800.

c) Routine evacuation transportations Kerch, Crimea escorts and escorts in the Black Sea. Nothing to report.

[redacted]

2 October 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

The daylight air reconnaissance stated coastal traffic with small towed convoys along the coast north and south of Anapa in both directions. 4 boats, course east, and 4 boats on land were seen 10 miles southeast of Sheljesni-Rog. 10 miles south of Anapa 2 motor minesweepers and 2 towed convoys with 2 barges each were observed and a short time afterwards again 2 motor minesweepers and 1 towed convoy with 4 barges also near Anapa.

Enemy Shipping in port:

Noworossisk: 1 large and 3 small boats.

Anapa: 11 Naval landing boats.

Gholenjik: 3 motor minesweepers, 5 coastal vessels, 3 tugs and 35 boats.

Yeisk: 1 motor gunboat, 1 coastal vessel, 4 naval landing boats and 40 boats.

Primorsko: 1 motor gunboat, 4 coastal vessels and 50 boats.

Kamishevatka and Yassenka 10 boats each.

Saski: 30 boats.

Achujevski: 1 coastal vessel and 5 boats.

Beside that Tuapse was reconnoitered, of which evaluation of aerial photograph will follow. Visual observation, however, stated among other 1 tanker of 7,000 tons and 2 freighters of about 1,000 tons each.

1st Air Corps reported that 1 large submarine was stopped and attacked with 2 depth charges 110 miles south of Cape Fakil at 0727. Large oil patches were sighted, damage probable.

Main Naval D/F Station reported that continuous movement of small vessels, especially T.B.'s and motor minesweepers, were intercepted near the east coast of the Black Sea, especially in its middle and northern part.

3 submarines were intercepted in the northwestern area of the Black Sea to the southwestern coast of the Crimea, 3 others in the southwestern Black Sea and 2 in the eastern Black Sea.

It is reported from the army situation on the Gotenkopf that the enemy pursuits in direct pressure our withdrawal, partly with the assistance of tanks.

Own Situation:

E-boats 42, 45 and 49 put into Ivan Baba at 0450 from operation against enemy roads and enemy supplies between Anapa and Cape Utrich without having seen the enemy. The boats reported that the Russians regularly searched the Anapa waters with searchlights every half hours.

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Motor minesweepers 35, 166 and 197 put in to Theodosia at 0650 from the patrol line south entrance to Kerch Strait; nothing observed. On their return passage they were attacked by enemy planes when passing an escort. The motor minesweepers reported: Probably 1 torpedo was launched, but the motor minesweepers were too far off. When they put in to Theodosia they were attacked with bombs from 2 Russian planes; no damage and no casualties.

Naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 9 and 3, naval ferry barge 303, RM 02 and RM 03 put in to Genichesk at 0700 from the patrol line. Nothing to report.

Our naval landing craft (guns) and naval ferry barges in the patrol line Taman north coast did not contact the enemy. In the early morning hours, however, they were attacked by Russian fighter planes. No casualties. Naval ferry barge F 472 reported from the patrol line Taman south coast at 0700: F 315 and F 302 had mine hits southeast of Cape Takil. At 0712 F 472 reported: Enemy planes, ask for fighter planes.

1st Air Corps is asked for fighter planes.

I came back to Simferopol at 0830 from the conference and issuance of orders in Kerch.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:

Wind northeast to east, force 4, locally force 5, fair, visibility 12 miles, morning haze.

Patrol lines were ordered for the night of 2/3 October as follows:

Motor minesweepers 35, 166, 197 and 203 south of the southern entrance to Kerch Strait. Round the Taman coast according to fundamental plan of Naval Shore Commander Caucasus.

Possible corrections resulting from enemy situation will be ordered in the course of the day. Details for the patrol lines are the same as in the previous days.

Naval ferry barges F 472 and F 583 from the patrol line Taman south coast put in to Kerch at 1030.

Air raid on Theodosia from 1130 until 1140 with 14 airplanes in an altitude of about 4,000 meters. About 80 bombs were dropped in dive from an altitude of 1,500 meters. Bomb hit on Motor minesweeper R 203 in the fore-ship; the boat is floating. Bomb hit on R 35, the boat was run ashore near the slip. The wreck of the "Pferde-Dampfer" (horses carrying steamer) partly burnt out. The [illegible]DER had engine trouble and slight damages on deck. The lighters 1476, 1293, 54,801 and the tug [illegible]KOMOR 2 had surface damages by bomb fragmentations. Smaller damages in harbor and railroad installations and accomodations. Navy: 16 killed and 24 wounded men.

[redacted]

2 October 1943

It must be reckoned with further heavy attacks on the harbor of Theodosia where there are temporarily many ships owing to the withdrawal of tonnage which no longer is used in Kerch. I arranged that the further withdrawal of vessels to Sevastopol will have a quick turnover and I ordered that the vessels are dispersed as far as possible as long as they are in Theodosia.

At 1424 Naval Shore Commander Caucasus reported details referring to the mine hits on F 302 and F 315:

On 45° 05' north, 36° 36.2' east (6.5 miles east of Takil) F 302 and F 315 ran on moored mines. F 315 has cast anchor in the mine area, F 302 is drifting off. A sea rescue plane and 2 naval landing craft (guns) have been successfully commissioned to rescue the crew. BA 54 with tug is on the way in order to attempt a salvage of F 315.

I gave the following orders to Naval Shore Commander Caucasus:

If it will not be possible to tow in F 315 the vessel is to be sunk. Drifting off to the open sea or to the enemy coast must be prevented.

The sea rescue plane of the 1st Air Corps brought 8 seriously wounded men and 12 slightly wounded to Kerch. The remaining crew was taken over by the F 445.

Because the motor minesweepers were damaged in the air raid on Theodosia the 1st U-Boat Flotilla is ordered to occupy with 2 boats the patrol line south of the entrance to Kerch Strait during the night of 2/3 October.

By special request of the 49th Army Corps owing to the new situation on the Taman peninsula the patrol line in the inner Taman bay between south point Chuda and Ssennaya (middle part of the patrol line) will be occupied already in the evening of 2 October from the southern point of the Chushka headland to Cape Rubanov with 5 naval ferry barges and from Cape Rubanov along the northern side of the bay of Ssennaya at first with naval landing craft (guns) No. 4 and 5 boats of the harbor defense flotilla Kerch. From the evening of 3 October this latter part of the patrol line will be reinforced by naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 1 and 11.

Naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 3 and 10, naval ferry barges F 492, F. 02 and F. 03 put out from Genichesk for the patrol line off the Arabat headland at 1730.

2 boats of the 1st U-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for the patrol line south entrance to Kerch Strait at 1900.

U-Boat Situation:

The Italian midget submarines CB 2 and CB 3 put in to Sevastopol at 1250 returning from submarine chase south of Sarych without having contacted the enemy.

The U-boat U 9 with its new commander Sub-Lieutenant Klapdor put out from Constantza at 1400 taking the northern route. The boat is additionally equipped with 1 TMB mine.

2 October 1943

The Italian submarines CB 4 and CB 6 reported to be ready for action on 3 October.

The U-boat U 24 is informed of the ships in Anapse port.- tanker of 7,000 tons and 2 freighters of 1,000 tons, respectively 1,2000 tons - and is ordered to occupy the position south of Anapse as soon as possible.

Enemy Air Activity:

In addition to the reported air attacks on the patrol lines near the northern and southern Taman coast repeated air attacks took place with bombs and machine gunning on naval ferry barges and naval landing craft (guns) in the patrol line near the Taman north coast in the early morning hours of the day. Although heavy bombers were attacking no damages or casualties were caused. Smoke clouds were observed in one of the enemy bombers.

A Kerch - Theodosia escort was attacked by 2 bombers at 0610. About 30 bombs were dropped. As only a few detonations were heard it is assumed that mines have been dropped. Immediately after having been fired at the bombers turned off. No damages.

Beside the already mentioned heavy air attack on Theodosia at 1130 there was already an air attack at 0930 by an enemy plane of type F 2 on the harbor. 4 bombs fell into the harbor basin, another one hit the mole head. No casualties.

About 1700 another Kerch - Theodosia escort was attacked by 12 air planes off Cape Takil. About 80 bombs and machine gunning. Minor damages. By well-aimed anti-air gunning the enemy planes were prevented from precision bombing. No casualties. The escort proceeded its passage. 1 enemy plane was shot down by fighters. During the day continuous heavy bomb attacks from great altitude on Ssennaya. 3 men killed.

Minesweeping Activity:

Several checks with minesweeping planes of the Main and the St. George arm of the Danube and the coastal route of the north entrance to Kerch Strait without result.

Supply Traffic:

a) After the last Taman escort had been dispatched the last escort from Ssennaya put out at 1745 on 2 October. Further crossing traffic will be done only from Kossa Chushka and the jumping-off bases between Cape Ili and Kuchugury in first line with combined operations boats. The main task of the sea forces will now be the security of the north and south entrance to Kerch Strait and of those coastal parts of the Taman peninsula which are still in our hands in order to secure the last phase of the withdrawal of the troops who are operating in the Gotenkopf.

b) Naval ferry barges F 493 and F 575, naval landing craft (guns) No. 4 and 5 fishing cutters put in to Kerch at 1340 coming from Genichesk.

c) Evacuation escorts Kerch - Theodosia - Sevastopol and the other Crimea escorts as well as escorts in the western Black Sea according to plans.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

In the southern part of the Sea of Azov and in the northeastern Black Sea the night air reconnaissance detected no enemy beside our own naval forces. During the day no enemy was sighted in the Black Sea. 15 miles north of Samsun 1 Turkish passenger ship of 4,000 tons with troops course east in the forenoon. In the area of Tuapse south of the town, 1 towed convoy consisting of freight-barges of about 300 tons, 3 landing boats, 1 motor minesweeper and 1 small patrol boat, course southeast. In the area 10 miles north of Batum 1 tanker and 5 escort vessels, course south.

Enemy shipping in port:

Primorsko: 1 motor gun boat, 4 small armed vessels, 2 coastal vessels, 80 boats. Yeisk: 5 motor gun boats, 1 small coast 1 vessel and 50 boats. Mariupol: 2 tow-boats, 1 motor cutter, 1 paddle steamer, 1 motor boat and 2 L.C.M.s. In the bay of Temriuk 4 boats, course north. Otherwise no enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Enemy shipping in the ports of the Caucasian coast:

Gelendjik: 6 motor minesweepers, 8 M.F.B.s, 23 landing boats, 12 small armed vessels, 7 tugs, 7 coastal vessels, 7 lighters, 3 motor gun boats and 25 boats. Noworossisk: 1 small motor gun boat, 1 landing boat and 1 small boat. Anapa: 6 landing boats and 6 small boats. Batum: 2 heavy cruisers, 1 light cruiser, 5 destroyers and 1 destroyer hull, 1 torpedo boat, 1 minesweeper, 3 submarines, 6 motor minesweepers, 5 M.F.B.s, 1 icebreaker, 3 tankers of 7,000 tons each, 4 passenger ships totaling 20,000 tons, 16 freighters totaling 18,000 tons and 20 boats. Photographic evaluation of yesterdays observation of Tuapse showed: 6 M.F.B.s, 5 minesweepers, 1 tanker of 7,000 tons, 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 1 motor boat and 25 small boats.

Altogether the photographic evaluation of the air reconnaissance from 1 to 3 October showed for the harbors Ochemchiri, Chobi estuary, Poti and Batum: 14 submarines and merchant tonnage of a total of about 150,000 tons (Chobi estuary: 22,000 tons, Poti: 61,000 tons, Batum: 57,300 tons), among them 7 tankers. Larger concentrations of motor landing boats in the southeastern bases were not recognizable, also no troop embarkations.

So it was not possible to state an increase of total tonnage since the last photographic evaluation 3 months ago. The report of Anglo-American supply of more than 1,000 landing boats and further 300 supply vessels (see War Diary of 24 September) must have been an intentionally deceiving report of enemy propaganda.

Main Naval D/F Station reported again normal movements of small vessels, M.F.B.s, motor minesweepers and patrol vessels activity.

Submarines: 4 in the northwestern Black Sea to the southwestern coast of the Crimea, 3 in the southwestern Black Sea, 1 in the eastern Black Sea on return passage and 1 in unknown position.

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Concerning the Army situation in the Ostenkopf it was reported that the withdrawal was continued according to plans and that the enemy but hesitatingly followed at first.

Own Situation:

The E-boats S 23 and S 49 put in to Ivan Baba at 0450 from the patrol line south entrance to Kerch Strait. No enemy was seen.

5 naval ferry barges put in to Kerch at 0600 from the patrol line near the Taman south coast. Nothing to report.

Naval ferry barge F 492, naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 3 and 10, RM 02 and RM 03 put in to Genichesk at 0740 from the patrol line along the Arabat headland and south of Ostrov-Birjuchi. Nothing sighted. Also the naval forces commissioned in patrol lines near the Taman north coast and in the bay of Ssennaya did not contact the enemy during the night of 2/3 October.

Naval Shore Commander Caucasus reported that of the 2 naval ferry barges F 302 and F 315 which had been lost by mine hits the wreck of F 302 had come out of sight in sinking state while the wreck of F 315 was subtled by gun fire. Research for F 302 by the Air Force was without success. Sinking must be assumed therefore.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Yalta: Wind east, force 3-4, fair, visibility 20 miles. Yalta to Noverossisk and Sea of Azov: Wind east, force 4-5, fair, visibility 15 miles.

The patrol lines for the night of 3/4 October are ordered by the Naval Shore Commander Caucasus in conformity with my instructions given in Kerch on 1 October according to the requirements of the Army and considering the daily changing situation as follows:

Taman south coast: 5 naval ferry barges, 3 of them from Sheljesni - Rog to halfways Cape Takil and the other 2 on both sides of route Brown 17. Center part: 5 naval ferry barges from south point Chushka headland to Cape Rubanov and the naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 1, 4 and 11 and boats of the harbor defense flotilla Kerch from Rubanov to Ssennaya bay.

Taman north coast: 7 naval ferry barges from Cape Kamony to our own front line and 4 naval ferry barges between Ili and Cape Warsovka. Patrol line south of Ostrov-Birjuchi to Chokrak is ordered just as in the last night.

Group South is answered on request that altogether 30 naval ferry barges including 5 naval ferry barges (guns) are provided for coastal defense. Remaining naval ferry barges are necessary for escort service and supply transportation. After finishing the "Brunhil" operation the 6 naval landing craft (guns) which are ready for action will remain in the Sea of Azov at first.

The following minesweeping planes were reported to Naval Group South as ready for action: Kerch 6, Gilatz 3, and 1 out of readiness, Ssarabus 1, in Germany for refitting period 3.

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With Admiral Black Sea Gkdos. Chefsache 241/43 AI and 242/43 AI the reasons for the situation of the barrages "K 8" and "K 15" were reported to Naval Group South (see enclosures).

The arrangements for the crossing plans for the last days of the "Brunhild" operation were reported with Admiral Black Sea Gkdos. Chefsache 243/43 AI to Naval Store Commander Caucasus to Army Group A, to the 17th and the 49th Army Corps (see enclosure).

Naval Port Commander Theodosia reported at 1130 according to yesterdays order of the Admiral Black Sea that 75 vessels were in port. If weather permits the greater part will be dispersed in Theodosia roads.

Naval ferry barges F 593, 125, 581, 476, 394, 132, 583 and 448 put out from Kerch at 1650 to the patrol line Taman coast.

Naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 3 and 10, naval ferry barge F 492, RM 02 and RM 03 put out from Genichesk at 1730 to the patrol line between Ostrov-Birjachi and the Arabat headland.

The other patrol lines are occupied according to orders.

U-Boat Situation:

Nothing to report.

Enemy Air Activity:

The naval ferry barges in the patrol line along the Taman north coast were repeatedly attacked during the day by strong formations of enemy bombers and fighters. 10 attacks were reported, among them 1 with 22 bombers and 10 fighters. 2 planes were shot down. Casualties or damages were not reported. In F 535 a 2 cm gun was put out of action because the trigger broke.

At 1600 air attack on Theodosia with 11 planes from an altitude of 4,000 meters.

25 bombs fell into the harbor basin and on the mole. No casualties, minor damages.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Several checks in the buoy line off Súlina and in the St. George arm with minesweeping planes without result.

Sevastopol: Check with towed loop gear on route Green from approach point Sevastopol to the north as far as the 40 meter line.

Kerch: Check for ground mines with minesweeping planes from route Red 14 via the Croni to route Red 16. Several checks without result. Barrage laying "K 10" carried out according to plans.

Supply traffic:

a) Crossing traffic in Kerch Strait, that is from Chushka according to plans.

b) Naval ferry barges F 577 and F 493 put out from Kerch at 1715 to Genichesk.

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c) Routine evacuation escorts Kerch - Theodosia and Theodosia - Sevastopol without special events. The last evacuation escort Kerch - Theodosia is to put out from Kerch in the afternoon of 4 October.

d) The other Crimea escorts and escorts in the Black Sea are running according to plans.

[illegible]

4 October 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Night air reconnaissance had the following results: at 0105 5 miles southeast of Cape Utrich 4 motor landing boats and 1 small armed vessel, northwest off Chelenjik; 1 small vessel; at 0150 10 miles northwest of Tuapse 1 small vessel; at 0210 in the bay of Noverossisk 1 small vessel.

No enemy was sighted in the Black Sea during the day. Close to the Turkish coast 2 passenger ships of 5,000 tons each with troops on board, course east, were sighted in the early morning hours.

Enemy shipping in port: Chelenjik: 11 motor minesweepers, 8 M.T.B.s, 9 motor landing boats, 6 coastal vessels and 14 boats. Anapa: 12 boats. Tuapse at 0922: 3 destroyers, 4 M.T.B.s, 1 motor boat, 2 coastal vessels and 25 small boats.

In the Sea of Azov no enemy shipping traffic.

In ports: Primorsko: 3 coastal vessels, 1 motor tug and 18 small boats. Yeisk: 5 coastal vessels, 9 motor minesweepers, 2 M.T.B.s, 4 landing boats, 1 motor tug, 1 motor boat on land and 14 small boats.

Air Force reported at 1145 1 small naval vessel, course northwest, near Chokrak.

Main Navy D/F Station reported again mainly M.T.B. and motor minesweeper movements near the west coast and moderate small vessel activity in the Sea of Azov. The following summaries were intercepted: 2 near the west and southwest coast of the Crimea, 1 in the southwestern Black Sea and 1 in unknown position putting out to sea.

It was reported from the army situation in the Bessenkopf that enemy attacks initiated with tanks were repulsed.

Own Situation:

In order to secure the Bessenkopf position the patrol lines near the Taman peninsula were carried out during the night of 3/4 October. Nothing to report. The patrol line near the southern Taman peninsula was fired at with artillery from the enemy coast at 0020 and at 0130.

Naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 4 and 11 which had been provided for the patrol line in the Asowsche bay ran aground after having put out near the northwestern corner of Tuzla.

They refloated only with tug assistance at 0745 on 4 October. Naval landing craft (guns) No. 1 anchored nearby on account of engine trouble and put in to Kerch again under own power at 0600 on 4 October.

[illegible]

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Navy ferry barge F 125 from the patrol line "center" was hit amidships by a mine on 45° 17.5' north, 36° 40' east (5 miles northwest of Taman) at 0545. The boat broke in the middle and afterwards was three times hit from the land by artillery of small calibre. 5 men are missing, among them the commander Sub-Lieutenant Mueller, 1 man seriously wounded and 4 others slightly wounded.

When I ordered the patrol line in the inner Taman bay I reckoned with such losses. I had to take them into the bargain considering the importance of a flank security of our own positions on the northern part of the Taman peninsula. Naval Shore Commander Caucasus is again pointed towards the necessity to maintain this patrol line even if losses should occur. Because the 3 naval landing craft (guns) had relieved out the patrol line in the Ssennaya Bay was only occupied with 4 harbor defense boats. On their return passage to Kerch after daybreak the boats were fired at from the shore by enemy artillery. Naval Shore Commander Caucasus is ordered to have the boats return so early from the patrol line in Ssennaya bay that they will be without the range of the enemy artillery at daybreak.

Naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 3 and 9, naval ferry barge F 303 and RA 02 and A 03 from the patrol line Ostrov-Birjuchi to Arabat headland put in to Genichesk at 0600. Nothing to report.

Naval ferry barges F 394 and F 445 put in to Kerch from the patrol line near the Taman coast at 0635.

Commander of the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla reported from Kerch at 0745 that barrage "K 10" had been laid out according to plans.

The smoke-laying group consisting of naval ferry barges F 536, 137, 312, 341, 593, 448, 581 and 574 put out from Kerch at 0910.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorssisk and Sea of Azov: Wind northeast to east, force 4 to 5, fair, visibility 20 miles.

Genichesk reported that the patrol line between Ostrov-Birjuchi and the Arabat headland will be occupied during the night of 4/5 October just as on the last day.

Naval Shore Commander Caucasus reported from Kerch that considering the new front line (the front runs from the northern edge of Ssennaya village to the southern edge of Achtanisovska) and conform with my instructions, he ordered the patrol line as follows: Taman north coast as yesterday, operational reserve in the north entrance to Kerch Strait 3 naval ferry barges; Taman south coast also like yesterday; center east part: naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 1 and 11 and 3 boats of the harbor defense flotilla Kerch; center west part: 4 naval ferry barges.

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I agree with a note in the documents submitted by the German Naval Command Italy concerning the possibility that our routes in the Black Sea may have been disclosed by the Italians and add that our routes have lost much of their secret character owing to the foreign crews of merchant vessels sailing in escorts. It must be assumed that the enemy knows our routes by his espionage in the Russian and Rumanian ports which we had conquered. In spite of that and also because of technical difficulties we do not think necessary to alter our routes.

According to report of the Director of the Chief Command Station of the Reinforced Frontier Guard Control Service (Coast), Regierungsrat Koenig, he has been told in Berlin in the last days of October by Rear Admiral Schubert of the Organization and Mobilization Branch, High Command, Navy, (in connection with the withdrawal of the personnel of the Reinforced Frontier Guard Control Service (Coast)) that no longer the Black Sea but the Adriatic Sea was the center of highest importance. I used to think that especially in these last weeks and also in the following ones everything was on the razor's edge - concerning the Crimea directly as well as the front just north of the Sea of Azov - and that a breakthrough there may have fatal consequences of the progress of war.' In my opinion the Navy's work concerning the naval forces as well as the coastal defense (including the Reinforced Frontier Guard Control Service (Coast)) was an essential part of the tasks arising from the operations in the Black Sea.

I have not been asked my opinion concerning the order to withdraw the personnel of the Reinforced Frontier Guard Control Service (Coast), and that does not only refer to the personnel becoming free on the Kuban bridgehead but also to a part of the personnel from the Crimea.

Naval ferry barges F 449, 474 and 306 put in to Kerch from the patrol line German coast at 1640.

The minesweeper detachment put out with 9 boats from Kerch to Genichesk at 1700.

Naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 9 and 10, naval ferry barge F 303, RA 02 and RA 03 put out from Genichesk to the patrol line at 1730.

Theodosia reported at 1730 that the escort passing from Kerch to Theodosia and consisting of 3 naval ferry barges, 4 tugs, 5 lighters and 20 fishing cutters was intercepted by the Russian air reconnaissance. Our air reconnaissance in future having stated 3 destroyers it must be reckoned with an operation against the Crimean south coast. The 1st E-Boat Flotilla is ordered to put to sea from Ivan Baba with 3 boats at 2200 for flank security of the escort. The position of the escort will be off point Brown at 2300. Speed of the escort 5 to 6 miles. E-boats for flank security will be about 5 miles south of route Brown off the escorts until 0300 and will always keep outside sight of the escort.

The officer commanding the convoy Crimean coast is ordered to inform the officer commanding the escort of the operation and position of the E-boats. 3 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba according to orders at 2200.

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U-Boat Situation:

S.O. escorts is ordered to transfer the Italian midget U-boats CB 1 and CB 2 to Constantza with the next escort, towed by the KYDUS. The boats will have their docking period there. The Italian midget U-boats CB 4 and CB 5 which are ready for action will be kept ready for the large-scale transportation escorts to the rear from Kerch Strait. From the same reason the U-boat U 9, ready for putting out, is temporarily kept back in the area between Yalta and Theodosia and temporarily commissioned for submarine chase. It is planned to employ all German and Italian U-boats which will be available on the day of the transportation to the rear as flank security of the large-scale escorts in about 30 miles distance from the coast. For this purpose the U-boats U 24 and U 20 will be withdrawn from their operational areas near the Caucasian coast.

Enemy Air Activity:

The patrol line near the Roman north coast was permanently attacked again during the day by enemy bombers and fighters, every time by up to 10 planes with bombs and machine-gunning. 9 attacks were reported; naval ferry barges shot down 3 enemy planes. No damage or casualties. During the night of 3/4 October altogether 17 air attacks took place on Theodosia harbor and town, mostly by individual planes. About 60 bombs were dropped, mostly in the roads, some into the harbor basin. No damage.

In the forenoon 1 torpedo was found in the bay of Theodosia the origin of which has not yet been ascertained.

Other air attacks on Theodosia took place at 0632, 1320, 1705, and 1725. The first 2 attacks were flown with 10 bombers and about 40 bombs were dropped each time. The tug TYLEM had slight fragmentation damage, the lighter 24705 heavy fragmentation damage, salvage attempts are going on. Harbor rails have been damaged.

Naval Shore Commander Ukraine additionally reported the following air attacks of 3 October: Heavy bomb attacks on Genichesk at 0420 and 1310, some damage to buildings, naval ferry barge 492 had slight fragmentation damage, the naval fuel depot was hit, 1 gasoline tank with 13 cbm. was hit. Several wounded men. At 0900 bomb attack on the 3rd Battery of the Naval Artillery "Abteilung" Birjuchi peninsula, parts of the position have fallen in.

The heavy air attacks on Genichesk and Birjuchi suggest preparations of a larger attack on our southern wing immediately north of the Azov coast with the aim of cutting the railroad Melitopol - Crimea. Furthermore they greatly affect the completion of Genichesk as a naval base for overhauling and wintering the naval forces left in the Sea of Azov so that the Air Force will be requested again to supply stronger antiaircraft protection.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: At km. 42 on the main arm of the Danube 2 mines were cleared. Either these mines have been laid a long time ago with a time setting device or the Rumanian minesweeping service has failed because no new penetrations have been reported.

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Sevastopol: Several checks with towed loop gear on route Green to the barrage were without result.

Kerch: Minesweeping planes searched the coastal routes for ground mines without success.

Barrage "K 10" was laid out according to plans.

Either these mines (see paragraph Danube) have been laid a long time ago with a time setting device or the Rumanian minesweeping service has failed as no new penetrations have been reported.

Supply Traffic:

a) Routine crossing traffic in Kerch Strait.

b) Naval ferry barges F 493 and F 577 coming from Kerch put in to Genichesk at 0600.

c) Routine escorts close to the Crimean coast and in the western Black Sea. Nothing to report.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Night air reconnaissance sighted no enemy vessels in the southwestern Black Sea to the southern point of the Crimea during the night of 4/5 October.

Enemy shipping in port: Tuapse: 3 destroyers, 4 M.T.B.s on land, 1 motor boat, 5 coastal vessels, 7 motor minesweepers and 12 small boats.

Sochi: 6 motor minesweepers, 1 M.T.B., 5 motor boats and 5 small boats. Otherwise no enemy reports from the Black Sea during the day. Visibility variable. The Caucasian coast was not reconnoitered in the afternoon.

Close to the Turkish coast several freighters and 1 passenger ship was observed in the forenoon.

Main Naval D/F Station reported increasing movements of small vessels, mostly M.T.B.s near the middle and the southern Caucasian coast. No important changes in the Sea of Azov.

9 submarines were intercepted, that is to say 3 in the western Black Sea to the southwestern Crimean coast, 1 in the northwestern Black Sea, 3 in the southwestern Black Sea and 2 in unknown positions. At 1915 Main Naval D/F Station reported that it might be reckoned with the putting to sea of one of the destroyers laying in Tuapse. About 2300 Main Naval D/F Station reported the position of the destroyer and that the intercepted destroyer was probably sailing with 4 M.T.B.s to the area south entrance to Kerch Strait.

From the army situation on the Gotenkopf was reported that the enemy attacks which had been assisted by tanks had been repulsed with heavy losses for the enemy. The enemy who had landed on this side of the Liman near Volubitzka was annihilated.

Own Situation:

Between 0200 and 0230 naval ferry barges in the patrol line near the Taman north coast about 5 miles northeast of Achilleon had a fight with several enemy gunboats which attempted to attack our own coasts. The attack was repulsed. The enemy withdrew to the north with high speed. No damage or casualties.

No special events were reported from the patrol lines near the Taman south coast and the inner Taman bay. The patrol line east of Cape Rubanov in the inner Taman bay was not occupied because the naval landing craft (guns) were not able to pass Cape Rubanov on account of rough sea.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 1 put in to Kerch from the patrol line Taman bay at 0430.

The smoke-laying group with naval ferry barges F 312, 536, 341, and 574 put out from Kerch at 0450.

E-boats S 42, 45 and 49 put in to Ivan Baba main at 0500 from a long distance escort Theodosia - Sevastopol. The escort had not been attacked. No enemy vessels were sighted.

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7 minesweepers which had been transferred from Kerch put in to Genichesk at 0615.

Naval ferry barge F 492, naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 9 and 10, RK 02 and RK 03 from the patrol line Ostrov-Birjuchi to Arabat headland put in to Genichesk at 0630.

Nothing to report.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Wind northeast to east, force 4; fair, visibility 15 miles.

Since it is urgently necessary for the judgment of the situation in the Sea of Azov to know the enemy shippings in the ports of the north coast the Naval Liaison Officer with the 4th Air Corps is ordered to ask for daily reconnaissance of the harbors of Taganrog, Mariupol and Berdyansk and to report the results immediately to the Admiral Black Sea.

By reason of the bomb hits on 2 motor minesweepers during the air attack on Theodosia on 2 October the Naval Shore Commanders and the Naval Port Commander were again pointed towards the necessity to disperse such especially valuable vessels in the harbor and to camouflage them with camouflage nets.

Because it must be reckoned with numerous vessels in the harbor of Balaklava in the course of the evacuation of transportation from Kerch to the west the Naval Shore Commander Crimea is ordered to take adequate measures as soon as possible. From the same reason it must be reckoned with numerous vessels in Sevastopol. Naval Port Commander Sevastopol is ordered to secure a good dispersion of the vessels and to use for this dispersion the northern, southern and western bays.

Naval Shore Commander Caucasus is ordered to repair the naval landing craft (guns) No. 4 as soon as possible so that immediately after return of the naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 1 and 11 from the patrol line it will be possible to transfer the naval landing craft (guns) No. 4 together with naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 1 and 11 to Genichesk in the last night of crossing. Final repair of naval landing craft (guns) No. 4 is to be completed in Genichesk.

On request of the German Naval Command the competences for anti-mine defense in the area of Odessa are decided as follows:

1.) Minesweeping tasks in the Bug - Dnieper waterways east of Pervomaisk with available means will be service of the German Naval Command.

2.) The Naval Shore Commander's task will be the organization of minedropping observation. He has been ordered to report what measures he had taken.

As 3 naval ferry barges (Siebel) will be necessary for barrage tasks in Sevastopol Naval Shore Commander Caucasus is ordered to send 3 of the 7 naval ferry barges (Siebel) in Kerch to Sevastopol as soon as barrage tasks in the Kerch Strait will allow their withdrawal.

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Operations of the patrol lines near the north and south coast of the Taman peninsula as well as in the inner Taman bay and also between Ostrov-Birjuchi and the Arabat headland are ordered for the night of 5/6 October just as on the day before.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 3, naval ferry barges F 493 and 577 and RM 02 and RM 03 put out from Genichesk to the patrol line at 1700.

After their engines had been overhauled the E-boats S 51 and S 52 put out from Constantza to Ivan Baba at 1700.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 11 from the patrol line Taman bay reported bombardment by enemy artillery at 1715.

Considering the presence of the destroyers which had been stated in Tuapse and which probably will be operating against Crimean escorts the 1st E-Boat Flotilla is ordered to take over the flank security of the tug escort Kerch - Theodosia. Details concerning the carrying out of the flank security as yesterday. Position of the escort Brown 17 at 1915, speed of advance about 5 miles.

Main Naval D/F Station Eupatoria reported at 1955 that destroyers had put out from Tuapse, course probably to the south entrance to Kerch Strait.

The following measures were ordered:

1.) The 1st E-Boat Flotilla had already been ordered before to secure the flank of the Kerch - Theodosia escort. By this measure also coast between Cape Takil and Theodosia will be protected.

2.) The U-boat U 20 will proceed with high speed from the area of Cape Utrich to the south entrance of Tuapse in order to catch destroyers on their return passage.

3.) The U-boat U 9 now in the operational area south of Cape Meganon is ordered to operate against destroyers.

4.) The patrol line south entrance to Kerch Strait remains with 4 naval ferry barges in position.

E-boat S 49 put out from Ivan Baba to Constantza at 2000 but returned on account of damage of the thrust bearings at 2200.

3 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for their ordered task at 2130.

U-Boat Situation:

Grid squares of the Air Force Nos. 4580, 5550 and 5570 are allotted to U-boat U 9 for submarine chase and lurking position. All seagoing vessels are given catchword orders for the imminent large-scale back escorts from Kerch Strait which they will have to protect.

In the conference with the Chief of the Italian midget flotilla the following items are fixed:

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1.) Those parts of the flotilla which could not make up their minds for further fighting and which were kept in Constantza under Rumanian supervision will not be accepted in the flotilla formation in spite of the fact that recently they seemed to have changed their minds. They will be detained by the Rumanians.

2.) The 2 damaged Italian midget U-boats CB 1 and CB 2 will be transferred to Constantza for overhauling. After 3 or 4 operations a further boat will follow. The necessary material and personnel will also be transferred back to Constantza.

3.) The two last midget U-boats will operate as long as possible from Sevastopol. It is attempted to relieve them by the two first boats when these will have become ready for action again after overhauling.

4.) At instigation of the Fleet Commander and with regard to the age of the here operating midget U-boats our proposal concerning the bringing up of new boats from the Adriatic Sea has been renewed to the Italian High Command via Naval Group and High Command Navy.

The midget U-boats CB 1 and CB 2 towed by the [illegible] left Sevastopol for Constantza at 1930.

Enemy Air Activity:

During the whole day there were permanent air attacks on the naval ferry barges operating in the patrol line Taman north coast. 14 attacks with up to 10 bombers and fighters with bombs and machine-gunning were reported. No heavy damages.

Also the harbor of Theodosia was several times attacked by Russian bombers and fighters at 0430, 0630, 0650, 1700 and 2315.

Numerous bombs were dropped. 2 lighters in the roads were damaged and beached. Concerning the air attacks on Theodosia yesterday there is an additional report that the damaged lighter 24706 has sunk in the harbor.

Bomb attack on town and harbor of Genichesk at 1420. No naval damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: Check sweep with towed loop gear on route Green from approach point Sevastopol to the barrage without result.

Kerch: The patrol line south entrance to Kerch Strait allegedly observed that mines were dropped. Although later checks did not confirm mine suspicion the motor minesweepers [illegible] 54 and [illegible] 56 were commissioned to check with oropesa gear from point 2 to Brown 17. No success.

Check sweep for ground mines with minesweeping plane from the north entrance to Kerch Strait and coastal route Cape Caroni - Cape Fenar without success.

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Minesweeping close to Sevastopol by 4 boats of the 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla as preparation for barrage "S 47".

Supply Traffic:

a) Routine crossing traffic in Kerch Strait.

Performed on 4 October:

1.) By navy and pioneers:

628 tons war material

5,758 soldiers and voluntary assistants

196 wounded men

20 civilians

754 motorized vehicles

552 animal-drawn vehicles

63 guns

7,477 horses

42 head of cattle

2.) By navy alone:

518 tons war material.

b) The last evacuation escort Kerch - Theodosia of 4 October turned near Cape Takil on account of rough sea and put in to Kerch again at 0335 on 5 October.

Putting out again at 1700 on 5 October.

The other Crimea escorts and escorts in the western Black Sea according to plans and without special events.

C[illegible]

6 October 1943

Sinferopol Annihilation of the Russian destroyer formation near the Southeast

Coast of the Crimea:

Already in the late evening hours of 5 October the main naval D/F station had reported that enemy destroyers were at sea northwest of Tuapse. Short after midnight the night air reconnaissance and the main naval D/F station intercepted 2 destroyers 60 miles south of Cape Chauda. They were permanently kept in touch.

By reason of the report from Tuapse that the destroyers had been sighted the 1st E-boat Flotilla was at sea as flank security of an escort Kerch - Theodosia. The 4 E-boats were engaged with enemy gunboats at 2325. After observed hits the enemy came out of sight in strong haze.

Our E-boats sighted the 2 destroyers for the first time at 0305 about 30 miles south of Theodosia Bay. When the E-boats advanced to launch their torpedoes and were in a distance of about 1,200 meters they were recoginzed a short time before or after the torpedoes were launched and fired at with all weapons. The enemy succeeded in out manoeuvring our torpedoes. With maximum speed the destroyers turned against our E-boats and tried to force them away. On this occasion S 45 had a 4.5 cm. hit in the side engine room. S 23 had withdrawn to the south and made a new attack by which the enemy was forced to turn aside. The E-boats were chased until about 0400. At the same time the destroyers turned to the south after having been bombed by reconnaissance planes.

Further torpedo attacks were rendered impossible by increasing day light. Anyhow, the attack on the escort and on the coast was repelled by the counter attack of the E-boats.

While the two destroyers were fighting with our own E-boats the flotilla leader C[illegible] operating close to the Crimean south coast had bombarded the coast between Yalta and Alushta at long range. A short time after 0400 the 1st Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment No. 601 from Yalta returned fire and observed covering salvoes. Afterwards the battery Livadia of the army coastal artillery joined the bombardment. When Yalta was bombarded roads, harbor and town were hit. Afterwards the enemy turned off to the east with so low speed and so much development of smoke that apparently the engines had been damaged by hits. Afterwards the C[illegible] bombarded Alushta but the impacts were too short. Then she turned off to the south at medium speed.

Thus the coastal artillery prevented the nearer approach of the flotilla leader and an effective bombardment.

About 0530 the flotilla leader C[illegible] and the two destroyers joined in grid square of the Air Force 5561. About 0700 there was a dive bomber attack on the returning enemy formation with bomb hit on one of the destroyers which immediately afterwards was a laze. A boiler explosion was observed 15 minutes later.

The damaged destroyer towed by the C[illegible] was sighted at 0 15.

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A second dive bomber attack took place about 1000. In this attack the other destroyer was hit by bombs so that she was set ablaze and did not move.

I considered an immediate operation of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla against the destroyer formation which was much reduced in its speed but I rejected this thought in favor of an operation in the next night.

Reasons: One of the destroyers was wet in full readiness for action. The other one could probably use her artillery. Owing to concentrated defensive fire of the 3 destroyers it would not have been possible for the E-boats to approach so much that torpedoes could be launched with some degree of effectiveness, not even if artificial smoke was used or pincer attack was attempted especially as the weather was clear and the visibility good. Beside that it must be reckoned with heavy air attacks on our E-boats which, according to previous experiences, can be extremely dangerous for our E-boats during the day.

According to air reconnaissance reports the speed of the destroyer formation was 5 miles. The next harbor, Tuapse, was 120 miles distant. Even if the formation with the towed destroyer would double its speed it would not reach a harbor before several hours after nightfall. So the E-boats would have after nightfall an opportunity to attack in cooperation with a night air reconnaissance plane with greater prospect of success and less risk.

The Air Force planes further dive bomber attacks. The air reconnaissance permanently pursues the position of the enemy destroyer formation.

One destroyer was stated in grid square 6571 at 1253.

Since 1300 Sukhum, Batum and Gheleniik were permanently sending radiograms to the destroyers which, however, were not answered since 1300. In a 3rd dive bomber attack all destroyers were hit at 1230. The 2nd destroyer was sinking at 1326.

According to observation report it was stated in radio traffic at 1505 that a further destroyer had put out to sea from a base in the southeastern Black Sea.

After the 3rd dive bomber attack the flotilla leader SMERKOM had hove to and picked up the survivors.

The 4th dive bomber attack took place at 1550. The flotilla leader SMERKOM was hit and sank 55 miles southsoutheast of Cape Chuda at 1627.

The 4th destroyer which had put to sea was reported in the area near Gheleniik in the afternoon.

It resulted from several observations that she had course to the place of accident.

[redacted]

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By reason of this report I adhere to my resolution to send the 1st T-Boat Flotilla into the area of accident during the next night. I suppose that the 4th destroyer is ordered to search for survivors.

The 4th destroyer was intercepted for the last time at 2305 in the area about 35 miles south of Cape ... According to radio bearing she ran about midnight into a harbor of the middle east coast, probably Tobruk.

Operation of the U-boats against the destroyer formation:

After 2 destroyers had been intercepted in grid square of the Air Force 6571 on course west with high speed the U-boat U 9 which was in grid square 5550 to 5570 was given attacking order with radiogram FT 0041. U 24 was ordered to remain in position south entrance to Tobruk. U 20 was again ordered to proceed with maximum speed to the north entrance to Tobruk.

The boats were informed by continuous transmission of the nearly complete air reconnaissance reports of the movements of the formation and of the appearance of the flotilla leader Hermann which took place about 0530.

After one of the destroyers had been damaged by dive bomber hit and the speed of advance had been decreased to about 5 miles the U 9 was again ordered to push forward with maximum speed.

At 0503 the boat contacted the destroyer formation but did not get into firing position.

After renewed dive bomber hits on the 2nd destroyer operations of U 20 and U 24 were considered by reason of air reconnaissance reports. But as the moment of contacting the damaged vessel would be during the night and because an air reconnaissance without rest and with the necessary accuracy for navigation would not be possible both submarines will remain in their positions close to the entrances to Tobruk. If contrary to expectation the formation should proceed to southwestern Black Sea operations will still be in time.

In spite of the scarcely remarkable progress of the formation of damaged vessels U 9 had contact again not before the afternoon when already 2 destroyers had sunk.

When attacking the heavily damaged Hermann she blew up owing to inner explosion and sank. The submarine reported at 1659: "Grid square of the Air Force 6571, at 1625 the destroyer exploded. In grid square 5582 several Russian reconnaissance planes. I return to my operational area."

Because another destroyer on course west had been intercepted in the area obviously hurrying up for assistance and because other enemy actions for rescuing survivors etc. are to be expected U 9 is ordered to stay in grid square 6570 until noon of 7 October, make use of all attacking chances and attempt, if possible, to take a ... prisoner.

Summarizingly it can be stated that with air reconnaissance and radio interception the operational plans of the enemy were recognized in time. Excellent cooperation of Air Force and Navy frustrated the enemy's plans. The enemy formation was annihilated by dive bomber attacks. The Soviet Black Sea Fleet lost the flotilla leader CHERVONA, 1 destroyer of the S-class and 1 of the G-class of altogether available 8 destroyers. Although the Russian Fleet suffered a remarkable loss by this action its absolute supremacy in the Black Sea is not questionable.

Nevertheless the success of our Air Force will have decisive importance on the further naval operations of the enemy and will hamper him for the first time after a long period the Russians had commissioned larger surface units for offensive operations against the Crimean coast. It may be assured that this was a push against our large Kerch evacuation escorts as well as the attempt to feel their way forward for a larger operation, probably for the landing operation which was planned according to prisoners and agents statements. At the beginning the Russian forces were pushed off from the escort by our E-boats and prevented from carrying out their task or were effectively barbarded by the coastal artillery, respectively. Afterwards, on his return passage, the enemy lost all vessels which had been engaged in this operation. So it must be stated that in cooperation of the naval forces, the coastal defense and the Air Force a full success was achieved which will not encourage the enemy who hitherto consequently spared his fleet, possibly from political considerations, to step out from his reserve. It is not improbable that thus large-scale landings on the Crimea planned with naval operations will have outrun or at least will have been disturbed in their temporal course. In addition to that the endangering of our escorts along the Crimean coast and also in the western Black Sea by attacks of superior enemy surface forces can be considered to some extent as much decreased at least for the next time. Moreover the sinking of 3 destroyers will not be without impression on Turkey and may even influence her attitude.

Enemy Situation:

In the other area of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov no enemy surface units were observed by air reconnaissance beside these destroyers.

In the western Black Sea, about 65 miles southwest of Sulina, 1 submarine was attacked with depth charges at 1250. Oil patch observed.

In the late afternoon Main Naval D/F Station reported increased activity of M.L.B.s and submarine chasers which were continuously intercepted in the area south of the Kerch Strait. Altogether 10 M.L.B.s and 3 submarine chasers were stated. In addition to that continuous movements of small vessels were intercepted. 9 submarines were intercepted during the day.

The following ships were stated in the northern parts of the Sea of Azov on 5 October: Berdyansk: 3 vessels, each of them 45 meters long; 17 motor launches, 1 paddle-wheel steamer. Mariupol: 12 vessels, each of them 75 meters long and 7 boats.

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It is reported from the army situation that the enemy succeeded during the night in landing on Kossa Tuzla. Our air force sighted 7 ferries. The enemy stubbornly defended himself protected by heavy artillery fire when we made our counter attack. Our counter thrust was successful in the evening hours.

Own Situation:

Sea alarm was ordered for the coastal areas of Naval Shore Commanders Yalta and Theodosia. Details concerning the bombardment by Russian destroyers see above.

The naval ferry barges operating in the patrol line near the Taman north coast were in fire fight with enemy naval forces near Peresyp from 0325 to 0355. Hits by quadruple and aircraft guns were observed; thereupon the enemy turned off to the north. Slight own damages.

3 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Baba at 0430. For contact with Russian destroyers see above.

Naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 1 and 11, naval ferry barges F 173 and 447 from the patrol line inner Taman bay put in to Kerch at 0450. Nothing to report.

4 naval ferry barges from the patrol line south entrance to Kerch Strait reported also no special events.

E-boats S 51 and S 52 coming from Constantza put in to Ivan Baba at 0610.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 3, naval ferry barges F 493 and 577, and [illegible] 02 and [illegible] 03 from the patrol line near the Arabatska headland put in to Genichesk at 0630. The boats had been fired at by our own units on land. Impacts from machine-gunning on naval ferry barges. Otherwise nothing to report.

Simferopol at 0830: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Wind northeast to east, force 4, in the evening east to southeast, force 4 to 5, fair, visibility 15 miles.

For the night of 6/7 October the patrol lines are ordered as follows:

Taman north coast from Cape Kamenny to the army front 7 naval ferry barges (from 7 October 2 naval ferry barges can be withdrawn owing to shortening of the front).

North entrance to Kerch Strait: 4 naval ferry barges, during the night between Ili and Cape Varsovka, during the day employed in transportation traffic and screening tasks, respectively.

Middle Taman Bay: 4 naval ferry barges from Chushka headland to Dubanov, 2 naval landing craft (guns) and harbor defense boats from Dubanov to the army front in Ssennaya Bay. 1 naval landing craft (guns) off the south point of Chushka headland; 2 naval ferry barges near the south entrance to Kerch Strait on both sides of route Brown and 3 naval ferry barges between Chelyesni [illegible] and halfways to Tokil.

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Naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 1, 4 and 11, and RK 02, 08 and 09 put out from Kerch for the patrol line inner Taman Bay at 1500.

Naval ferry barges F 492 and 303, naval landing craft (guns) No. 10 and RK 02 and 03 returning from the patrol line near the Arabatsko headland put in to Genichesk at 1630.

Investigations why the patrol line had been fired at during the night of 5/6 October proved that the Rumanian battalion stationed near Chekrak was not acquainted with the German vessels in this area. The commander of the battalion was informed.

1st E-Boat Flotilla is given operative orders for the night of 6/7 October against the Russian destroyer which had put out to sea. Putting out to sea has been ordered for 1730. Cooperation with the night reconnaissance plane. The E-boat flotilla is informed of the situation and the sinking of the 3 destroyers. No anti-submarine operation because none of our own U-boats is in that area.

The radar post at Cape Chibder intercepted from 1720 until 1745 a sea target in 12 km. distance. Naval Shore Commander Crimea gave sea alarm and ordered a short burst of fire according to the radar bearings. Since according to observation reports there were no enemy vessels in that area it is assumed it was but a reflex in the radar apparatus and no enemy.

4 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla put for the ordered operation from Ivan Baba at 1800.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 4 reported from the patrol line in the inner Taman Bay at 1930: Damage of starboard engine, port side engine trouble.

The batteries, Naval Artillery Detachment No. 613 which were operating on the Taman peninsula have gone into the following new positions: The 6th Battery (formerly Temruk) with 3 7.5 cm. field guns near Shukevka, south of Cape Panar; the 7th Battery (formerly west of Taman Getzuchi Kut I?I) with 3 7.62 cm. S.K. (semi-automatic) guns for the defense of Kutish Burun harbor; the 9th Battery (formerly Sholjesni Bug) with 4 12.2 cm. field howitzer guns near Cape Ak Burun west of Yakil, and the 13th Battery with 4 7.62 cm. near Jenish Yakil, north of Yakil.

U-Boat Situation:

The Italian midget submarines CB 3, 4 and 6 which are ready for action are ordered to operate as flank security of the large-scale escorts after the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead. In this framework the boats will at first be transferred to Yalta and will occupy from there positions in the area between Sarich and Yalta and then, on key-word, in contact with the German U-boats in the patrol line.

Enemy Air Activity:

The naval ferry barges in the patrol line near the Taman north coast were permanently attacked again by heavy air raids with bombs and machine guns. Naval ferry barge F 537 had slight damages.

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Close to Theodosia an air attack took place at 0715 on an escort from Kerch by 12 dive bombers from an altitude of 200 m. with bombs and much machine gunning. No damage was done.

Other air attacks on Alushta, Ivan Baba and Theodosia caused no damages worth mentioning.

At 1235 air attack on Ili; no naval damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

Routine minesweeping on the Danube and near Sevastopol was carried out without success.

Naval Port Commander Yalta reported that 1 mine was sighted in the area 2 miles south of Alushta.

Supply Traffic:

a) Routine crossing traffic in the Kerch Strait. Nothing to report.

Performed on 5 October:

1.) By navy and pioneers:

573 tons war material
10,402 soldiers and voluntary assistants
134 wounded men
379 civilians
264 motorized vehicles
1,109 animal-drawn vehicles
84 guns
2,210 horses
37 head of cattle

2.) By navy alone:

453 tons war material.

b) Routine Crimea escorts and escorts in the Western Black Sea, without special events.

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Sinferopol Enemy Situation:

The night air reconnaissance reported 3 enemy gunboats near the position where the 3 destroyers had been sunk apparently searching for survivors.

On anti-submarine operation during the night in the western Black Sea and on the escort route Constantza - Sevastopol 2 enemy submarines were attacked with depth charges by a plane of type Blohm & Voss. On account of darkness no result was observed.

The early daylight air reconnaissance observed 4 enemy planes moving in circles over the place of accident. Our own fighter plane reported that an enemy plane bombarded a submarine in that area. Possibly U 9 may be in the question which was ordered to remain near the place of accident until about 1000. During the day 2 motor minesweepers were observed in the same area.

No enemy vessels were sighted in the southern and western Sea of Azov during the day.

Liner traffic of ships in both directions close to the Turkish southeast coast. Only a few vessels in Gheleniik. In Anapa and in Noverossisk no vessels were observed. Tuapse at 1145: 1 destroyer, 2 probable torpedo boats, 4 coastal vessels, 1 floating crane, 2 minesweepers, 8 L.f.B.s, 4 motor minesweepers and several small boats. 25 miles northwest of Tuapse 1 coastal vessel.

Main Naval D/F Station intercepted 1 destroyer near the northern part of the east coast about noon. This destroyer had been intercepted the night before on her way to Tuapse. By radar interception another destroyer was intercepted at noon near the southern to the middle Caucasian coast coming from the southeast. Brisk small vessel movements in the eastern Black Sea.

6 submarines were intercepted, 2 of them southwest of the Crimea, 2 others in the central Black Sea and 2 in the eastern Black Sea.

It is reported from the army situation in the Gotenkopf that by our counter attack the enemy had been pressed together on Kossa Tuzla. Allegedly the enemy landed with 4 boats in the rear of the rear guards of the 49th Army Corps. This landing was not observed by the boats of the patrol line. It must have taken place in a considerable distance behind our front line.

Own Situation:

In the operation ordered for the night of 6/7 October the boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla contacted several gun boats at 1955, among them 2 boats with 7.5 cm. guns. A 4 cm. gun in the S 42 was put out of action. The S 28 had a 4.5 cm. hit in her collision compartment. The S 52 had slight fragmentation damages. On 2 of the enemy vessels hits of 2 and 4 cm. were unobjectionably observed. After the E-boats had turned off from the enemy the ordered operation was continued. Nothing else was seen on the spot where the destroyers had sunk but a large patch of oil.

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The ordered patrol line in the direction of Tuapse was only possible until midnight on account of bad weather coming up (Wind northeast, force 5 to 6, swell 4). Cooperation with the night reconnaissance plane by direct telephone communication has proved well again.

E-boats put in again to Ivan Baba at 0430.

Nothing was to report from all patrol lines during the night of 6/7 October. All boats from the patrol lines put to their bases at daybreak according to plans with the exception of the naval ferry barges from the patrol line near the Taman north coast which, according to orders, kept their positions also during the day.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Wind east, force 4, during the night force 3, fair, visibility 20 miles.

1st Air Corps, Commander Naval Air, Black Sea was requested to provide close security and fighter protection with all means for the withdrawal of all naval landing craft, pioneer ferries, pioneer boats, Siebel ferries and tugs from Kerch. This operation under code name "Viking" will probably be carried out during the night of 8/9 October and continued on 9 October from daybreak until nightfall and on 10 October from daybreak until arrival of the 3 groups of about 60 vessels each in Sevastopol. In addition to that said Naval Air Commander was requested to reconnoiter the Caucasian ports and to fly reconnaissance, if possible without gaps, in the eastern Black Sea and to fly night reconnaissance in the nights until 10 October north of point 44° north, 35° east. 1st Air Corps, Commander Naval Air, Black Sea will be given further details concerning the operation "Viking".

Naval Shore Commander Caucasus is ordered to send 3 naval ferry barges (mines) to Theodosia after they will have carried out the ordered minefield task. The other naval ferry barges will remain in Kerch for the barrages K 13, 14 and 15. It is planned to employ the 3 naval ferry barges (mines) for laying out a mine barrage in front of the Bay of Theodosia. 1 naval ferry barge (mines) will remain in Kerch for further barrage tasks.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea, is informed that 3 naval ferry barges (mines) for minefield tasks Sevastopol (see War Diary of 5 October) will probably arrive in Sevastopol on 10 October.

Motor minesweeper R 197 is ordered to transfer from Theodosia to Kerch together with motor minesweeper R 66 in the morning of 8 October. The boats will be at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander Caucasus for the operation "Viking".

In conformity of Sea Reconnaissance Distribution "Nautische Nachrichten" the new route north entrance to Kerch Strait is published.

Patrol lines during the night of 7/8 October are ordered as follows: Taman north and south coast altogether 11 naval ferry barges, Inner Taman Bay and Ssennaya Bay 2 naval landing craft (guns) and 3 naval ferry barges.

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Arabatska headland 1 naval landing craft (uns), 2 naval ferry barges, RM 02 and 03.

The E-boat S 49 put out from Ivan Baba for Constantza at 1400 in order to have her engines overhauled.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 9, naval ferry barges F 493 and 577 and RM 02 and 03 put out from Genichesk at 1630 for the patrol line near the Arabatska headland.

Naval ferry barges F 341, 312, 536 and 593 put out from Kerch at 1630 for the patrol line.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 11 reported at 1715 from the patrol line in Ssemnaya Bay: Bombardment by salvo guns from the land.

Admiral Black Sea, Dockyard Control Staff, sent on 6 October the following teletype concerning conversion of war transports to anti-submarine chasers:

" Dr. Scholz sent teletype on 29 September to Nikolaiev dockyard: I cannot order the conversion of the war transports KT 38, 27 and 28 to anti-submarine chasers as long as the High Command, Navy does not comply with the demand of the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping for 6,400 tons of material for ship constructions. The High Command, Navy is again requested to clear up matters as soon as possible.

Scholz"

Addition by Admiral Black Sea, Dockyard Control Staff:

" Conversion of these 3 vessels to anti-submarine chasers had been discussed in Berlin on 23 July in a conference with regional leader Kaufmann in the presence of Admiral Fuchs. High Command Navy promised to examine the delivery of the material even that very day. The delay which has taken place in the meantime compels us to state that probably it will no longer be possible to complete in this year the completion of the 5th and 6th vessel in Nikolaiev as anti-submarine chasers.

Admiral Black Sea, Dockyard Control Staff"

Above teletype is filed into War Diary as typical document characteristic for these days because such and similar cases were not understood at the front.

The 9th Anti-aircraft Division increased the anti-aircraft protection of the basin by 2 heavy and 1 light anti-aircraft batteries thus complying with my request.

U-Boat situation:

After the last destroyer which had been at sea in the northeastern Black Sea had put out in the U-boat U 20 had been given operational liberty in the whole operational area between Cheleniik and Tuapse.

[illegible]

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The U-boat U 9 was commissioned to operate against the 4 enemy submarines which had been intercepted by Main Naval D/F Station and which probably will cruise near the place of accident where the destroyers had sunk in order to rescue survivors. No success had been reported.

U 24 reported: "Grid square of the Air Force 9412 1 double miss at coastal vessel, 700 tons, loaded, swell 1 to 2, depth 4 meters, MZ in track angle 148° and 150°, present position 9424, available 3 torpedoes and 17 m3 fuel. Night short-wave reception nearly impossible."

Enemy Air Activity:

Continuous air raids in waves with bombers and fighters on the naval ferry barges in the patrol lines near the Taman North coast.

Several men wounded, the boats, however, were not damaged worth mentioning. It was reported at 0623 that enemy reconnaissance planes spotted one of our escorts sailing from Sevastopol to Constantza. An attack was made at 1030 20 miles east of Cape St. George by 5 planes with 3 aerial torpedoes and 2 aircraft mines; no hits.

At 0650 air attack on Yalta by 4 planes in diving attack. Several casualties. A hit astern the tug [illegible] caused a fire which could be extinguished after about 1 hour. The lodgings of the crew were burnt out, the engine damaged.

Several air raids on Chushka peninsula and Ili.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Minesweeping by mine exploding vessel 193 and minesweeping planes without result.

Sevastopol: Several checks with towed loop gear on route Green from approach point Sevastopol to the barrage. 1 mine was cleared on this occasion.

Supply traffic:

a) Routine crossing traffic in the Kerch Strait.

Performed on 6 October:

1.) By navy and pioneers:
540 tons war material
8,438 soldiers and voluntary assistants
159 wounded men
205 civilians
946 motorized vehicles
792 animal-drawn vehicles
79 guns
3,253 horses
3 head of cattle

2.) By navy plane:
405 tons war material.

b) Evacuation convoys from Theodosia to Sevastopol and routine Crimea escorts and escorts in the Black without special events.

[illegible]

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

At 0210 the night reconnaissance plane reported an enemy escort, course southeast, 5 miles south of Ghelenjik. The escort consisted altogether of 4 coastal vessels and 2 motor minesweepers. The daylight reconnaissance did not observe any movements of enemy vessels near the Caucasus coast. There was not much change in the harbor of Tuapse compared with yesterday. The destroyer is still in Tuapse.

During the night hours of 7/8 October 2 motor minesweepers on searching course were observed where the destroyers had sunk. Afterwards the motor minesweepers turned to Ghelenjik.

3 M.T.B.s were observed 20 miles south of Opuk in the forenoon and 2 M.T.B.s 25 miles southwest of Anapa in the afternoon.

No special observations were made in the Sea of Azov.

Main Naval D/F Station reported that the 2 destroyers which had been intercepted yesterday were still in Tuapse in the afternoon. Probably they have put to sea about 2200.

Near the middle and southern east coast of the Black Sea moderate small vessel movements, during the night increasing.

9 submarines were intercepted: 3 in the area west and southwest of the Crimea, 3 in the middle Black Sea, 2 on return passage in the southwestern Black Sea and 1 submarine in the eastern Black Sea.

From the army situation was reported that an enemy attack on Kossa Tuzla in the morning hours was repulsed. The withdrawal from the Taman peninsula comes off according to plans. An enemy attack with tank assistance was smashed. The enemy felt his way forward only with slight forces in the course of the day.

Own Situation:

Nothing to report from the patrol lines near the Taman north coast and the north and south entrance to Kerch Strait as well as from the patrol lines near the Arabatska headlans during the night of 7/8 October. As far as the boats were not in the ordered patrol lines during the day they returned to their bases.

The motor minesweepers R 197 and R 66 which had been transferred to Kerch according to orders put in to Kamish Burun at 0440.

The E-boat S 49 put in to Constantza at 0730 for engine overhauling.

From the Taman north coast the naval ferry barge F 449 reported at 0920: Enemy artillery fire seawards west of Cape Kamenni.

Simferopol at 0630: I am going to Kerch and to the Kuban bridgehead in order to be in close personal connection with the commanders of the other parts of the armed forces during the last phase of the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead and to be able to remove difficulties on the spot which may arise in the immediate return transportation from Kerch to the west of the total tonnage which will be released then.

[illegible]

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Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Wind east to southeast, force 4, during the night force 3, clouded, visbility 15 miles.

The patrol line near the north entrance to Kerch Strait will be occupied by 5 naval ferry barges, the patrol line in the inner Taman Bay by 2 naval landing craft (guns) during the night of 8/9 October until the Gotenkopf position will be completely evacuated. 5 naval ferry barges will be near the south entrance to Kerch Strait as security.

The patrol line near the Arabatska headland will be occupied with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 harbor defense boats just as on the previous days.

The crossing traffic from Kossa Chushka to the Kerch peninsula in order to transfer the last troops from the Taman peninsula is to be completed until 2400 of 8 October according to plans.

After the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead will have been completed the removal of all naval and pioneer boats from Kerch in 3 escorts of about 60 vessels each will be ordered. Naval ferry barges and motor minesweepers will secure the escorts. Flank protection towards the sea will be carried out by the 1st E-Boat Flotilla, 3 German U-boats and 3 Italian U-boats.

Kossa Tuzla will be evacuated as the last position presumably at daybreak on 9 October.

It is provided that the 1st convoy will assemble about 2300 for sailing to Sevastopol; the 2 other convoys are to follow in intervals of about 1 hour.

The 1st E-Boat Flotilla is ordered: Boats in Ivan Baba, ready for action will be in immediate readiness from daybreak of 9 October.

By request with the 1st Air Corps for close security and fighter protection for the large-scale convoys will be complied with. With daybreak security will be prepared with 1 plane of type Ne 110 and 1 of type Ju 88 and fighter protection with 1 flight of Me 109 or Me 110.

Naval Store Commander Caucasus had asked agreement concerning dismissal of the 3rd Group of Minesweeping Planes after the "Viking" operation would have been carried out. He is answered that the 1st Air Corps has been asked to keep 2 minesweeping planes in Samotrsk for operations in the Kerch Strait as long as there will be the possibility of using the coastal route through Kerch Strait. The other minesweeping planes and the ground organization of the squadron will transfer to Odessa.

Both groups of the patrol line near the Taman north coast and near the north entrance to Kerch Strait were bombarded by enemy artillery since 1500.

Naval ferry barges F 492 and 303, naval landing craft (guns) No. 3 and [illegible] 02 and 03 out out from Genichesk at 1630 for the patrol line near the Arabatska headland.

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When the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead will be finished the Naval Liaison Officer with the 17th Army Corps will be given statements on the assistance of the navy. In these statements will be particularized what follows:

In the framework of the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead the navy had the task in cooperation with pioneers to remove the troops with their armament and equipment, the stock of ammunition and supply goods existing in the bridgehead, the motorized and animal-drawn vehicles and the civilian population with valuable mobile possessions.

The first task of the navy was to remove by sea as much material as possible from the harbors Anapa and Temriuk which were next to the front line in order shorten the transportation over land and to relieve the places of embarkation on the east bank of the Kerch Strait. These transportations over routes which were only about 40 miles distant from enemy bases and therefore permanently exposed to attacks by superior enemy naval forces were endangered moreover continuously by enemy mines so that the escorts had to be carried out with anti-mine protection. On such occasions numerous mines were cleared. Every day the convoys were attacked by the enemy air force with bombs and machine guns. Considering the importance of the task occurring losses had to be taken into the bargain.

In addition to naval vessels numerous pioneer ferries and pioneer boats were employed for short crossings within the Kerch Strait from Taman, Ssennaya and jumping off bases on Kossa Chushka to Kerch. First of all the navy removed material, the pioneer boats troops, vehicles and horses. Altogether navy and pioneers removed during the evacuation until 6 October inclusively:

103,602 tons war material,
202,810 German and allied soldiers, voluntary assistants,
16,166 wounded men,
24,740 civilians,
18,936 motorized vehicles,
25,097 animal-drawn vehicles,
1,514 guns,
72,555 horses and
6,221 head of cattle.

Beside transportation the main task of the navy was the security of the transport routes and of our own coasts towards the sea against enemy attacks by surface forces and landings in the rear of our own front. This task was solved by the dayly laying out of patrol lines near the Taman north and south coasts and close to the south and north entrance to Kerch Strait and by the operation of E-boats on the approach routes of the enemy. Enemy forces attempting to approach our coasts were repulsed by our patrol forces in numerous minor fights.

By extensive mine fields, especially close to the south entrance to Kerch Strait, and by our patrol forces the enemy was prevented to enter the Kerch Strait and so the endangering of the here running crossing traffic was avoided.

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The naval forces were assisted by the naval coastal artillery which repeatedly fired at enemy vessels approaching the coast and so forced them to turn off. So the enemy was only able to harass naval transports by continuous air attacks. In this he did not achieve lasting success because the anti-aircraft defense of the escort boats and of the naval ferry boats prevented in most cases a systematic attack and so precise bombing.

From the beginning of the evacuation the enemy lost 10 planes by our shipboard anti-aircraft guns.

Summarizingly it can be stated that the operations of our naval ferry barges, naval landing craft (guns), E-boats and motor minesweepers for flank security of our convoys and our own coast prepared the necessary foundation for the unimpeded and so routine carrying out of the removal and the withdrawal when the Kuban bridgehead was evacuated.

U-Boat Situation:

The Italian midget submarines CB 3, 4 and 6 left Sevastopol for Yalta at 0615, ready for flank security of the large-scale convoys. They put in to Yalta at 1630. The U-boats U 24, U 20 and U 9 are given key word for 1500 of 9 October, the Italian midget submarines for 1600 of the same day. At this date-time all 6 boats will be in the ordered positions for flank security of the evacuation convoys.

Enemy Air Activity:

Several air attacks in low level flight with bombs and machine-gunning on the patrol lines [illegible] north coast. No losses or damages were reported.

1 man was killed in an air attack on the patrol line south entrance to Kerch Strait.

At 0130 air attack on Genichesk with individual bombs. No military damage. From 1130 to 1200 and at 1415 air attack with altogether 18 planes on 4 waves on a convoy Theodosia - Sevastopol south of Cape Sarach. More than 140 bombs were counted altogether. Only minor fragmentation damages. 1 enemy plane was shot down.

About 1400 3 Russian planes were said to have dropped 12 mines south of Cape Sarach in the course of convoys. No detonation.

Several air attacks during the day on the places of embarkation on the Chushka headland.

Minesweeping Activity:

Routine minesweeping in Danube and Sevastopol without success.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea, reported that a floating mine of type [illegible] was blasted near point Green 12 (south of Mangalia) on 8 October.

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The barrages K 13 K 14 in the Kerch Strait were laid out according to plans during the night of 7/8 October.

Supply Traffic:

a) Routine crossing traffic in the Kerch Strait.

Performed on 7 October:

1.) By navy and pioneers:

589 tons war material
10,458 soldiers and voluntary assistants
145 wounded men
62 civilians
843 motorized vehicles
809 animal-drawn vehicles
90 guns
9 tanks
2,102 horses
34 head of cattle

2.) By navy alone:

444 tons war material.

b) Routine Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

The daylight air reconnaissance observed no enemy vessels in the Black Sea.

Near the Caucasus coast 30 miles southsoutheast of Ghelenjik 3 naval landing boats, course west, at 0405.

Enemy shipping in port: Tuapse: 1 destroyer, 3 motor minesweepers, 5 M.T.B.s, 19 naval landing boats, 7 coastal vessels and 24 boats. Ghelenjik: 25 naval landing boats, 7 motor minesweepers, 6 M.T.B.s, 2 coastal vessels and 26 boats.

In the southern and western part of the Sea of Azov no special vessels were stated.

Main Naval S/F Station reported 1 destroyer near the middle east coast coming from the southeast. At noon the destroyer was in the area west of Sochi.

The movements of small vessels considerably decreased along the whole eastern coast.

2 submarines were intercepted in the northwestern Black Sea and in the Crimean area, 2 others in the southwestern Black Sea, 1 in the eastern Black Sea, and 1 in unknown position.

Own Situation:

With the removal of the last troops from the Chushka headland and Kossa Tuzla the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead has been finished about 0400.

Following the report concerning the part of the Navy in the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead which had been submitted to Army Group Southern short report was submitted to the High Command, Navy, Naval Staff, Operations Division. In it was specified that the task of the Navy consisted in the removal of the extensive material (ammunition, food supply, commissary goods etc.) At first the greatest importance was attached to the relief of land transports from the ports Anapa and Temriuk which was close to the front. The transports by naval ferry barges over the open sea were exposed in a high degree to enemy attacks by superior naval forces, submarines and air forces. Transports from Anapa and Temriuk were continuously carried out until the evacuation day. For instance 8,583 tons of war material were transported in 124 passages of naval ferry barges from Anapa to Kerch.

The Navy was operating in the Kerch Strait with naval ferry barges, tugs and lighters especially for the transportation of material. The Navy removed since the beginning of the evacuation of the bridgehead on 7 October:

97,941 tons war material,
12,437 wounded men,
6,329 soldiers,
12,383 civilians,
1,195 horses,
2,265 head of cattle,
260 motorized vehicles,
777 animal-drawn vehicles,
33 guns.

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The most important task of the Navy beside the carrying out of transportations was to secure these transports and the north and south entrance to Kerch Strait towards the sea and to prevent enemy landings in the rear of our own front. This task was completely solved by patrol lines near the Taman north and south coasts, close to the north and south entrance to Kerch Strait and in the inner Taman Bay be naval ferry barges and naval landing craft (guns). Enemy naval forces and landing boats, attempting to approach the coast, were repeatedly repulsed by patrol forces.

Naval coastal artillery repeatedly forced enemy vessels when approaching to turn off. Every day up to 20 naval ferry barges and naval landing craft (guns) were commissioned in patrol lines for coast defense. Since 7 October the 1st E-Boat Flotilla was 16 times in patrol lines on enemy approach routes, the 11th E-boat Flotilla 7 times.

Our patrol forces and E-boats had 12 fights with enemy surface forces during the time of evacuation. On these occasions and in 7 offensive operations of the E-boats against enemy bringing up of material to the front 1 gunboat and 5 supply vessels with altogether 2,100 tons were sunk.

During the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead the enemy attempted, especially by employing numerous air planes to harass the transports by attacks on the convoys, on embarkation and disembarkation places and on our patrol forces. Altogether 420 planes carried out 35 air attacks on transports and patrol forces. 12 planes were shot down by shipboard defense.

Continuous and partly heavy air attacks took place on the places of embarkation and disloading, especially Taman, Ssennaya, Kerch and Theodosia. In the course of these attacks we totally lost: 1 naval ferry barge, 1 motor minesweeper, 4 harbor defense boats, 1 tug, 5 lighters and 1 motor fishing cutter. Heavily damaged were: 2 motor minesweepers, 2 naval ferry barges, 3 tugs, and 2 lighters. Numerous vessels suffered damages from fragmentations. Naval personnel of the Naval Port Commander decisively participated in the defense when Noworossisk was attacked. Naval artillery sank 2 M.T.B.s, 1 escort vessel, 7 landing boats and 2 pneumatic boats of the enemy landing vessels.

During the evacuation the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was in continuous activity for mine checking and for clearing the route of the Anapa Convoys. On this occasion 15 mines were cleared on the Anapa supply route.

2 naval ferry barges were lost by mine hits in the patrol line near the Taman south coast and 1 naval ferry barge in the patrol line in the inner Taman Bay.

As defense of the Kerch Strait against penetration of enemy forces further barrages in the south and north entrance to Kerch Strait were completed since 7 October and 722 moored mines and 134 non-contact mines were laid out. The harbors of Noworossisk, Anapa and Temriuk were fouled with non-contact mines and the moles and harbor installations were thoroughly destroyed by explosions previous to the evacuation.

[illegible]

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After the Kuban bridgehead had been evacuated the transport vessels of the pioneers were sent out to Sevastopol in 3 convoys of about 70 vessels each under escort protection of naval ferry barges and remote escort of E-boats and C-boats. Cape Takil was passed by the 1st convoy at 0445, by the 2nd convoy at 0700 and by the 3rd at 0815. Commander, Naval Air, Black Sea, provided fighter protection.

Nothing was reported from the patrol lines under Taman Bay and south entrance to Kerch Strait during the night of 8/9 October. Boats operating in the patrol lines put in to Kerch after having performed their tasks.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 3, naval ferry barges F 492 and 303 and [illegible] 02, 03 put in to Genischesk at 0600 coming from the patrol line near the Arabatska headland; nothing to report.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Light variable winds, clouded, local showers, visibility 6 to 10 miles, patches of fog.

Assuming that the enemy will offer to with swift surface forces against the 3 large-scale convoys next night the 1st E-Boat Flotilla is ordered to put out to sea with 5 boats at 1630 as flank security of the convoys towards the sea. The patrol line will be occupied with individual boats of the convoys and parallel to their course. Their sidewise distance from the convoys will be 6 miles, length of the patrol line 10 miles. The 1st E-Boat Flotilla will be exactly informed of further details.

The S.O. boats of the 3 convoys will be informed of the operations of the E-boats.

Naval Shore Commander Crimea is ordered to prepare mooring sites in Sevastopol for the 3 large-scale convoys of altogether about 220 vessels which will presumably put in between 1700 and 2000. He has also to prepare boats for anchoring directions. The vessels are to be distributed on berths and all bays. The same measures are to be taken by way of precaution for Balaklava. The 1st E-Boat Flotilla will put in to Balaklava with 5 boats about 0500 of 10 October. The boats will make fast in dispersion; camouflage measures have to be prepared. Referring to the report submitted with Admiral Black Sea Gkdos 6385 AI the Naval Group South is given the following example concerning the operation of the naval forces:

Activity of the patrol line Taman north coast during the last 10 days, on the average occupied with 5 to 8 naval ferry barges, 50 air attacks with altogether 297 enemy planes. Result: 9 enemy planes were shot down. Own losses: 1 man killed, several wounded men, minor material damage.

Military addition: Barrage fire with a captured gun 7.5 cm from a naval ferry barge turned out very well.

Concerning the mining of our own harbors I report to Naval Group South that on request Corps [illegible] of the 1st Air Corps answered that the Air Force was not able to place 4 aerial mines at my disposal for the possible mining of the Crimea harbors.

[illegible]

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Naval Shore Commander Ukraine received an order from the Field Commandant Nikolaiev on 9 October which had been transmitted by Army Group A that he had to remove the naval units from Nikolaiev until 1700. As reason was given that the transfer of units could only be carried out with the permission of the authorized Army Commander. The Naval Shore Commander had moved into the buildings which had been requisitioned by the Navy and had reported them as occupied by the Navy 4 days before the law declaring the closed area came into force.

By intervention with Army Group A the Army Group immediately canceled this order on a most generous scale in form as well as in material.

I explicitly note that again and again subordinate army offices (in this special case a corps commandant) encroach upon the rights of the Navy in spite of the decrees concerning the Navy's authorities in ports as they have been stipulated with Armed Forces High Command 1760/43 Gkdos, Operations Staff, Forward Echelon of 30 July 1943 and High Command, Navy, Organization and Mobilization Branch, 381/42 Gkdos.

5 E-boats put out from Ivan Baba at 1630 for flank security of these convoys.

Naval landing craft (uns) No. 10, naval ferry barges F 493 and 577, and RA 02 and 03 put out from Genichesk at 1630 for the patrol line Arabatska headland.

4 RK-boats put out from Kerch at 1710 for the patrol line between Pavlovski channel and [illegible] lanka.

The remaining part of the convoy consisting of 4 naval ferry barges, the tug [illegible] with towed naval landing craft (uns) No. 4 and 6 combined operations boats put from Kerch to Theodosia at 1800.

Simferopol at 1645: Weather forecast:

Freshening winds in the afternoon, force 4 to 5.

E-boat S 51 attacked an enemy submarine 5 miles south of Cape Meganon at 2051. Double shot and afterwards depth charges in the diving spot. No result observed.

U-Boat Situation:

U-boats U 24, U 9 and U 20 proceeding to the positions in the patrol lines. U 24 reported in grid square of the Air Force 6560 at 1120 1 enemy P.T.B., course east, high speed, in addition to that machine-gunning from fighter planes. Apparently no damage.

The Italian midget U-boats CB 3, 4 and 6 put out from Malta for their positions as flank security.

All boats were continuously informed of the observation and bearings of enemy submarines in the operational area.

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[illegible]

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U 23 reported to be ready for [illegible] on 10 October. At the same time considerations were made concerning the U-boat operations after the evacuation will have been completed:

By the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead a new situation has also arisen for the U-boat operations in as much as the enemy has no longer to provide a fighting front in the northeast of the Black Sea with increased supplies by sea transportation. So there will be no reason to have the U-boats operating in the northeastern Black Sea, but it must be assumed that there will be permanent sea transport to a certain extent in the southeastern Black Sea, possibly also in individual cases from Turkey. Orders therefore for U 23:

March via south route to operational area between Poti and Ochemchiri.

U 24 and U 9 are provided for the bordering areas in the northwest, Sukhum - Pitsunda and south of Tuapse, while U 20 will have to return in the next days because she had been out at sea already for 24 days.

Enemy Air Activity:

Air attack on the 1st large-scale convoy by 7 bombers at 0700:

1 combined operations boat totally lost by bomb hit; 1 plane shot down by ship hard anti-aircraft gun.

At 0836 air attack on the 3rd convoy off Cape Takil (from 0810 fighter protection and close security with the formations. Earlier start was impossible on account of fog over the air base.).

More air attacks on the convoys in the course of the day but without causing any damage because the enemy planes were mostly pushed aside by our own fighter defense. At 1135 attack with 15 bombers and fighter planes who were pushed off.

At 1427 air raid on Theodosia with 6 bombers and 2 fighter planes. 20 bombs on the harbor and in the roads; small damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: 8 checks with towed loop over on route Green from approach point Sevastopol to the barrage with no success.

Barrage M 15 was laid out in Kerch Strait according to plans. Thus all barrages ordered up to now have been laid out. Others are planned but not possible for the time being from want of mine material. As next task it is planned to close the Pavlovski channel and to lay a minefield on the way of Theodosia.

Supply Traffic:

Routine convoy traffic along the Crimean coast. Routine convoy traffic in the western Black Sea until afternoon. Because weather [illegible] the worse (wind north to northwest, force 5).

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea, postponed all convoys and ordered 4 hours readiness.

[illegible]
[illegible]

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

The night air reconnaissance plane located 3 small vessels about 10 miles southeast of Gheleniik in the night of 9/10 October, 1 coastal vessel near Anapa at 2355 and 2 M.T. .s 10 miles southeast of Gheleniik.

During the day no movements of enemy vessels were sighted neither near the Caucasus coast nor in the Sea of Azov.

1 submarine was attacked with bombs 20 miles south of Sudak at 1225. No success. Another submarine was sighted 5 miles east of Alushta at 1400.

Main Naval O/F Station Eupatoria intercepted in the evening and in the late afternoon hours 1 destroyer in the area of Purpse in radio traffic. For the rest moderate movements of small vessels in both directions near the Caucasus coast.

4 submarines were intercepted in the area between the northwestern Black Sea and the south to southwestern Crimean coast.

Naval Port Commander Kerch reported that enemy vessels had been observed ½ mile north of Kossa Tuzla and that several enemy vessels surrounded Kossa Tuzla with a smoke screen at 1550.

Own Situation:

Constantza at 0001: Gale warning:

Area Constantza - Odessa: Wind north, force 7 to 8, squally.

Convoys are to be kept back on account of the weather.

Nothing to report from the night of 9/10 October.

The remainder convoy from Kerch consisting of 4 naval ferry barges, the tug MSL with naval landing craft (guns) No. 4, 1 assault craft and combined operations boats put in to Theodosia at 0400.

4 harbor defense boats from the patrol line in the Bay of Kerch put in to Kerch at 0430. Nothing to report.

RM 02 and 03 from the patrol line between Ostrov - Birjuchi and the Arabatska headland put in to Genichesk at 0515. Naval landing craft (guns) No. 10 and naval ferry barges F 493 and 577 returned at 0715. Nothing to report.

Naval landing craft (guns) Nos. 1 and 11 coming from Kerch put in to Genichesk at 0530.

Anti-submarine chasers 23 2302, 2303 and ship 19 coming from submarine chase in the area Tarchankut - Eupatoria put in to Sevastopol at 0915. No success.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria: Wind north, force 5 to 6, mostly clouded, visibility 6 to 10 miles.

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Yalta to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Wind north to northeast, force 4, later force 5, clouded, visibility 10 miles.

The 3 escorts of the operation "Viking" were at 0700: 1st convoy 5 miles west of Cape Aitodor, 2nd convoy 3 miles east of Cape Aitoxador, 3rd convoy near Cape Nikitia.

On account of the expected bad weather, wind north, force 5, the combined operations assault crafts will be endangered after having passed Cape Khersonese. The 3 Commanders Convoys are therefore ordered to have all combined operations assault crafts the S.O.'s boats of all transport squadrons included when passing Balaklava enter harbor.

The 1st E-Boat Flotilla is ordered to transfer back from Balaklava to Ivan Baba with 5 boats via route Broen at 1700.

By reason of a report from Cape Ili that 1 submarine was observed in 175°, 4 miles distance, at 0735, afterwards submerging, the 3 large-scale convoys are ordered to strictly look out for submarines.

The following patrol lines are ordered for the night of 10/11 October: Between Ostrov - Birjuchi and Arabatska headland occupancy like on the days before. 3 naval ferry barges and 4 harbor defense boats in Kerch Strait between Pavlovski channel and Kolonka.

During that north-northeast weather the large-scale convoys will proceed to Cape Khersonese on lee of the coast. Only after Cape Khersonese will have been passed and the course will have been changed to the east there will be some danger for those vessels which are not seaworthy. In order to have an objective judgment of the weather and to be able to stop the convoys in time, if necessary, before passing Cape Khersonese I ordered that the Commander of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla immediately put out from Sevastopol to Kherson to report if weather conditions will permit proceeding or not.

4 naval ferry barges, 8 combined operations ferries, 1 combined operations boat and 2 assault boats put in to Yalta at 1150 in order to load timber for Kherson. Onward routing is planned for 11 October if weather will permit.

Commander of 1st Landing Craft Flotilla reported via Kherson at 1200: From position: Wind north, force 5, swell 3, all courses can be kept well.

The 3 large-scale convoys put in to Sevastopol one after the other at 1800, 1830 and 2245. The combined operations assault craft of the 3rd large-scale convoy, had separated before passing Cape Khersonese and have put in to Balaklava under the leadership of motor minesweeper R 166.

The assault craft of the 1st and 2nd convoy had proceeded to Sevastopol because the radiogram was not received which ordered to dismiss the assault craft to Balaklava, because receiving conditions were very poor on the Crimean south coast.

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Especially the 3rd convoy was repeatedly attacked by enemy bombers and fighter planes in the course of the day. In most cases, however, the close security and the fighter protection of the convoy succeeded in pushing aside the enemy planes so that only small damage was done. In an air attack of 40 enemy planes at 0800 4 planes were shot down by Rumanian fighters and 1 by German fighters.

Naval ferry barge F 474 of the 3rd large-scale convoy was hit by a torpedo (submarine attack) 2.5 miles south of Kikeneiz at 1325. The boat sank. Most of the crew was rescued.

With the safe transfer of these convoys to Sevastopol the navy finally solved its task concerning the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead. Further tasks of the navy must be considered now.

The Russians are no longer in the necessity of supplying a battle front north of the Caucasus. Thus their sea traffic in this area will considerably decrease. After the loss of 3 destroyers near the Crimean coast the Russian will probably keep his surface forces more in reserve. But these will always be a threatening of our own convoy traffic. The enemy air force and the enemy submarines are another treatening to our own convoy traffic. The possibility of a landing on the Crimea from the Black Sea as well as from the Sea of Azov is not only still existing but even increases with the increasing length of nights. The navy in the Black Sea will therefore have also in the future the following tasks:

1.) Offensive operations against enemy surface forces whenever the opportunity presents itself.

2.) Attacks on the enemy escort traffic as far as it will be carried on, first of all probably in the southeastern Black Sea.

3.) Assistance of the operations re 1.) and 2.) by offensive mine operations.

Re 1.) to 3.): Execution by E-boats and U-boats.

4.) Protection of our own convoy traffic in the western Black Sea and along the Crimean coast as before. It must be reckoned with increased air attacks.

5.) Intensive combatting of enemy submarines in the western Black Sea and along the Crimean coast by as many boats as possible of the anti-submarine flotillas in construction (war transports and armed fishing vessels).

6.) Protection of the Crimean coast from enemy landings form the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov (patrol veil at sea if the weather is suitable; on land naval and army coastal artillery).

7.) Offensive combatting of light enemy forces which may appear in the Sea of Azov with the still available naval landing craft (guns) and naval ferry barges, assistance of our own right army flank by bombarding the coast.

8.) Getting influence on the Rumanian coastal defense in Transnistria and Rumania.

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Following the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead a teletype arrived in the afternoon from the Commander in Chief of Army Group A, Field Marshal von Kleist, with following contents:

"To: Commanding Admiral Black Sea

Vice Admiral Kieseritzky,

Your naval forces and transportation formations participated decisively in the frictionless evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead. The security of the flanks of the retiring army troops from enemy landing attempts was just as important as the hard service in the crossing traffic and convoy traffic which required the highest operational readiness.

Your crews may proudly look back on their cooperation in the evacuation.

To you and your formation I express my acknowledgment and my gratitude.

Commander in Chief, Army Group A

Signed: von Kleist"

Commander 1st E-Boat Flotilla reported: Flotilla put out to sea from Balaklava at 1600 for Ivan Baba.

Naval landing craft (Gums) No. 9, naval ferry barges F 492 and 303 and for the first time 2 minesweepers of the combined operations unit put out from Genichesk at 1630 for the patrol line between Birjuchi and the Arabatska headland.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea reported at 1645: On account of bad weather all ordered convoys have been postponed.

4 harbor defense boats and 3 naval ferry boats put out from Kerch at 1700 for the ordered patrol line in Kerch Strait

5 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Baba at 2000.

U-Boat Situation:

U-Boat U 23 put out from Constanza at 1600 for her 3rd operation via south route to the operational area "Otter" - "Panther".

U 20 on her return passage via north route to Constantza steered round the operational area of the Italian midget submarines.

U 9 and U 24 are proceeding to their operational area via north route. Following to a report of the Chief of Staff, Admiral Black Sea at the Commanding Admiral Army Group South it is reported referring to the operations of the Italian midget submarines:

1.) An offensive operation of the Italian midget submarines against the Caucasian harbors is impracticable because:

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a) The Italian midget submarines are able to be at sea at best 60 hours, that is at a speed of advance of 4.5 to 5 miles per hour and a minimum sou urn of 36 hours in an operational area in no more than 60 to 70 miles distance from the base.

b) The distance Theodosia - Tuapse, however, is 160 miles. Even the operational areas in front of the Caucasus harbors are outside the operational radius (Theodosia - Anapa 85 miles, Theodosia - Noverossisk 105 miles).

c) The strong fragility of machinery due to old age which had been observed in former operations shortens the operational radius still more.

Enemy Air Activity:

Attack with 8 air planes on Malta harbor at 1435. 50 bombs on the mole. The mole head was hit. Naval ferry barge F 472 sprang aleak. 1 combined operations ferry at first ablaze, also aleak, in the course of the aftern on beached outside the harbor. The BAINAL was hit again and damaged. Several wounded men.

Minesweeping Operations:

Danube: Several checks with minesweeping planes on the Macin Arm without success. The Macin Arm was opened again from 0 to 74.

Supply Traffic:

Convoys in the western Black Sea were postponed on account of the weather.

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Sinferopol Enemy Situation:

The night air reconnaissance stated no enemy shipping traffic in the northeastern Black Sea during the night of 10/11 October.

Daylight coast and sea reconnaissance was rendered difficult by the weather. No reports concerning enemy vessel movements.

Main Naval O/P Station Eupatoria intercepted 1 destroyer in the area of Tuapse in the evening. In the same area moderate movements in both directions of small vessels.

4 submarines were intercepted in the area of the northwestern Black Sea and in the area south to southwest of the Crimea.

Own Situation:

Nothing to report from the night of 10/11 October.

Reconnaissance flights on account of the weather.

3 naval ferry barges and 4 harbor defense boats from the patrol line in Kerch Strait put in to Kerch again at 0430. Nothing to report.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 9, naval ferry barges F 492 and 303 and 2 combined operations motor boats from the patrol line near the Arabatska headland put in to Genichesk at 0620. Nothing to report.

On account of the weather the carrying out of the patrol line was rendered very difficult.

Sinferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria and Cape Tarkan: Wind northeast, force 6, cloudy, showers, visibility 15 miles.

Feldhof to Novorossisk: Wind northeast, force 4 to 6, cloudy, visibility 12 miles.

Naval Shore Commander Ukraine received the following instruction concerning patrol lines:

1.) If there are no special symptoms of enemy landing plans alternately occupation of the patrol lines off the northern part of the Arabatska headland and the Dirjuchi headland. Occupy the concerned patrol line from nightfall until daybreak with 4 naval landing craft (guns) or naval ferry barges.

2.) If by reason of air reconnaissance, agents reports or prisoner statements it must be reckoned with enemy landings the patrol lines mentioned under 1.) are to be occupied with all available naval landing craft (guns) and naval ferry barges which are ready for action.

3.) Assignment of the harbor defense flotilla and the combined operations boats for additional harbor and coastal defense as the Naval Shore Commander may decide.

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Motor minesweeper R 166 in Balaklava is ordered on account of the weather not to put out to Sevastopol together with the combined operations assault craft.

Naval ferry barge F 583 in Kalta is ordered that the 6th naval ferry barges operational group with combined operations ferries and craft will not put out to Sevastopol until the weather will improve.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea and the 5th Landing Flotilla are informed that the naval ferry barges (munes) 418, 467 and 448 in Sevastopol are at the disposal of the Commander for mine tasks. The naval ferry barges are to be employed in the transfer to Constantza for the security of the combined operations boats on their passage to Sevastopol - Nikolaiev.

Naval Shore Commander Ukraine is informed that it is planned to repeat the bombardment of the enemy front and the disposition of troops near Kirilovka and Stepanovka (considerations referring to future tasks in yesterday's War Diary). Naval Shore Commander Ukraine is ordered to inform the army leader in authority and to report the desires of the army concerning the objects which are to be bombarded or possibly joined operations.

Naval Shore Commander Ukraine reported from Genichesk at 1945 that the patrol lines could not be occupied on account of bad weather and that the naval landing craft (guns) had entered harbor because they had not been able to keep in the roads.

Naval Port Commander Kerch reported at 2000 that the patrol line in Kerch Strait could not be occupied on account of bad weather.

U-Boat Situation:

The Italian midget U-boats CB 3, 4 and 6 put in to Sevastopol at 1500. No enemy was sighted.

Enemy Air Activity:

Naval Shore Commander Ukraine reported that bomb attacks on the town area of Genichesk took place from 1930 to 2025 of 10 October. About 10 bombs. No naval damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

Nothing to report. Minesweeping planes and minesweepers were not able to start on account of the weather.

Supply Traffic:

On account of the weather no convoys.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

The air reconnaissance stated no enemy shipping traffic in the middle and eastern Black Sea or near the Caucasus coast. No harbor reconnaissance was flown. Commander air reconnaissance West reported at noon 1 vessel 55 miles south of Cape Chaudn which seemed to be a patrol boat and which was protected by air planes. Because the sighting of one individual patrol boat at force 8 of the wind 8 to 10 about 100 miles from the next harbor cannot be explained I asked the Commander, Naval Air, Black Sea for details. It followed that on account of the defense by enemy planes our air reconnaissance was not able to state the type of the vessel with certainty. I believe that it was an enemy submarine which came back from operations in a damaged state - unable to dive - and was protected by air planes.

Main Naval D/F Station reported at 0410 that according to intercepted radio traffic and inaccurate direction finding, the cruiser "ADMIRAL SCHEER" and 1 destroyer were in the area south of Novorossisk. This report was not confirmed by later distant reconnaissance, and in the course of the day the units were not intercepted again by the main naval D/F Station.

As for the rest the main naval D/F Station reported only slight movements of small vessels.

1 submarine was intercepted about 70 miles southwest of Tuapse.

Own Situation:

With regard to the weather in patrol lines during the night of 11/12 October. No interceptions.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Wind northeast, force 8, in squalls up to 10, cloudy, visibility 15 miles.

With regard to the continuously stormy weather no operations in the next night.

After the weather will have improved it is planned to forward immediately the nearly 200 combined operations boats to Nikolaiev. They had been transferred from Kerch to Sevastopol in 3 large-scale convoys following in short intervals one after the other. The crowding of vessels in Sevastopol requires a quick evacuation.

With regard to the permanent air and submarine danger and possibly arising deterioration of the weather during the voyage the formation is not to be held in that massed form in which it had been escorted from Kerch because the Kerch situation after the evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead had to make use of the surprise factor for the enemy in bringing the vessels through the south entrance to Kerch Strait. However we are no longer forced to transfer the massed.

On close examination of all possibilities and considering the security, fighter protection and emergencies (superiority, likelihood and bad weather as cases of refuge) it is provided to forward the vessels from Sevastopol to Nikolaiev in 2 escorts of 3 formations each so that about 30 to 35 vessels will form 1 formation.

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Naval Port Commander Kerch reported that owing to the bad weather the following vessels had sunk in the harbor or damaged: Harbor defense boats RK 13, 16, 21, 24, 26, RT 1, 2 and 3.

During the continuous northeast gale the inner net-barrage in the harbor of Theodosia broke adrift and was heavily damaged. In addition to that tug 4108, lighter 3221 and 3 fishing cutters have sunk.

In the Kerch Strait several floating mines, some of them drifted ashore.

South of Pavlovski channel a drifting small boat was sunk by 2 cm. fire about 2000.

The gap caused by explosion in the mole in Yalta which had been closed in May 1943 was opened again by the pressure of the swell about 2230. On this occasion 1 harbor defense boat and 1 fishing cutter were drifted ashore and damaged.

Since 11 October battery Cape Ili (south of Theodosia) is ready for action with 4 guns 12.7 cm.

U-Boat Situation:

U 20 put in to Constantza from her 3rd operation at 1610.

Minesweeping Activity:

Naval Port Commander Ochakov reported that the Rumanian observation post on Pervomisk Island observed a suspicious air plane coming from Nikolaiev at 1950; impacts were observed in the direction of Kuterra.

With regard to the possibility that mines had been dropped the shipping traffic from Odessa to Ochakov has been closed for the time being. Minesweeping tasks could not be carried out on account of the weather.

Supply Traffic:

The planned convoys could not be carried out.

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Sirferopol Enemy Situation:

Daylight reconnaissance in the Black Sea sighted no enemy vessels. 10 miles northwest of Evpatoriya 1 Turkish steamer of about 1,000 tons, course east, was seen about 0800. On account of the weather the Caucasus harbors could not be reconnoitered.

Enemy shipping in port: Eupatoriya: 30 boats, partly ashore. Primorsko Akhtarsk: 6 large motor gunboats, 1 M.A.B., 1 small coastal vessel and about 40 boats, partly ashore. Kamyshevtka fishery: 17 boats, 13 of them ashore. Yeisk: 1 M.A.B. and about 75 small boats in the harbor and east of the headland.

Main Naval D/F Station reported only minor activity of small vessels (probably patrol boats within the range of the enemy bases), no statements.

Own Situation:

On account of the weather neither patrol lines nor S-B at operations during the night of 12/13 October.

Sirf reported at 0930: Weather forecast:

Kurort Rivierovo Sevastopol and Cape Fiolent: Wind northeast, force 6, in squalls up to 8, cloudy, visibility 15 miles.

Owing to permanent bad weather no convoys have as yet been resumed.

61 members of the navy have been rescued from distress at sea in the last 9 months by the air-sea rescue service in the Black Sea, if wounded in naval or base or air attacks, have been flown to hospitals. Only by airway transport was it possible that the wounded had quickly the urgently necessary medical care which was not available on board the vessels. In a special writing to the Corps General Staff, 1st Air Corps Leader has by gratitude for the energetic and willing help and assistance.

The German Naval Command had asked to be allotted 4 naval ferry barges of the 1st or 7th Landing Boat Flotilla sustainability this request by the fact that the now available escort units were not sufficient for the future increased convoys. The German Naval Command is answered that after the transfer of the co-ordinated operations barges from Sevastopol to Yeisk today will have been finished the 7th Landing Boat Flotilla will be filled up by naval ferry barges from the 5th Landing Boat Flotilla and the rest of it will be placed at the disposal of the Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea for convoy and escort tasks.

Naval Port Commander Eupatoria reported that during the storm the old jetty had been severely damaged by 2 naval ferry barges lying alongside and that there will not be sufficient shipping facilities until a new jetty will be established.

Naval Liaison Officer Yalta reported that storm and high water disturbed the labor in Feodosiya. By this fact the naval landing craft (guns) M. 11 went adrift and ran ashore and which her bows above the harbor. Preliminary attempts of rescue very were with out success with the small strength.

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Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: 2 minesweeping planes checked the Kilia Arm from km. 74 to 98 without success.

Other minesweeping tasks were not performed on account of the weather.

Supply Traffic:

Convoys were not yet continued on account of the weather.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

The night air reconnaissance spotted 1 submarine 12 miles south of Tuapse, 2 coastal vessels and 2 M.T.B.s, course northwest, 20 miles southeast of Gheleniik, and 1 small unit off Gheleniik.

During the day no enemy vessels were sighted in the Black Sea.

1 freighter of 3,500 tons near the Turkish coast, 15 miles northwest of Ucnye; the steamer [illegible] of 777 tons, course west, 20 miles northeast of Samsun, and 1 Turkish passenger ship of 4,000 tons, course west, near Dafra Burnu.

Sea of Azov: No reports on enemy vessel movements. Shipping in Yeisk and Primorsko Akhtari unchanged in comparison with yesterday.

Main Naval D/F Station reported minor activity of patrol vessels in the base areas. With the exception of 1 enemy submarine in the eastern Black Sea no other vessels were intercepted in radio traffic.

Own Situation:

With regard to the permanent bad weather no patrol lines during the night of 13/14 October and no E-boat operations.

Owing to the storm the net-barrage in Yalta harbor broke and drifted together near the first buoy.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Wind northeast to east, force in the northern part 6, otherwise 5, cloudy, visibility 15 miles.

The unfavorable weather does not yet permit the rebeginning of convoys, minesweeping tasks and patrol lines.

Mine laying in the Bay of Theodosia was planned as next minefield task because according to agents reports and by reason of the geographical character we have to reckon with enemy landings first of all on the bottle neck of the Kerch peninsula. On account of its steep shore the eastern half of the Bay of Theodosia is not suited for landings with heavy material.

The western part, however, as a sandy flat coast where landings, even with heavy material, are possible.

With Admiral Black Sea Gkdos.Chefsache 248/43 AI of 14 October 1943 the Commander of the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla is ordered to lay out the barrages S 71 and S 72 in the western part of the Bay of Theodosia (see enclosure).

The Commander of the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla is ordered to transfer, as soon as weather conditions will permit, with the [illegible] boats group via Yalta to Theodosia. Putting out from Sevastopol so that Yalta will be reached at daybreak.

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Before entering Yalta the area from the harbor approach as far as 1000 m outside the net barrage is to be checked in a width of 600 m with creepsa gear. (During the night of 13/14 October 2 mines exploded near Yalta and it can be expected that still other mines will be drifted off by the storm.) The R1 group will proceed from Yalta to Theodosia at nightfall. After arrival in Theodosia the mine task has to be carried out according to orders mentioned above.

The 1st E-Boat Flotilla is informed that the area between 42° 12.4' north and 42° 13.5' north, east of 41° 36.1' east is closed on account of mine danger.

Naval landing craft (guns) No. 11 which had run aground in Genichesk has refloated yesterday.

U-Boat Situation:

Extract from the brief report of submarine U 20 which entered Constantza on 12 October returning from her 3rd operation:

Put out to sea on 16 September. Nothing to report on approach via south route. 1 destroyer and 1 large patrol vessel observed south of Pati during the night of 19/20 September. During that day 5 steamers observed on southerly courses. The ordered mine task carried out. Afterwards proceeded to Sevastopol in order to replenish stock of torpedoes. Left Sevastopol on 24 September for the operational area "Tapir". On 28 September under-water attack on the stranded steamer in grid square of the Air Force 9412. Groundrunner. Only small boats sighted along the coast. On 29 September reached new operational area near Cape Utrich. Near the coast only traffic with small motor boats (possibly motor landing boats). Towed convoy sighted in grid square of the Air Force 7519 on 2 October. Enemy was faster and got away. Attack on towed convoy in grid square of the Air Force 7541 on 3 October; torpedo missed. On 5 October attack on a moored lighter in Ambra which was discharging. Unexplained miss. On 6 October in position against destroyers near the northern entrance to Bosporus; only M.T.B.s observed. On 8 October in position in patrol line for flank security of the large-scale escorts Kerch-Sevastopol. Nothing to report. On 10 October return passage to Constantza commenced.

Enemy Air Activity:

At 0535 7 ground attack aircraft over Ak Burnu fortress, machine-gunning; no damages were reported.

About 0530 during an air attack on Ivan Baba the base of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla was attacked by 8 Russian airplanes of type IL 2 with about 10 bombs and machine-gunning. 6 hits, medium damage in buildings; 1 enemy plane was shot down by anti-craft artillery.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping in Berezan-Channel-Ochakov with minesweeping planes, 9 checks without result.

Otherwise no minesweeping activity on account of the weather.

Supply Traffic:

With regard to the weather it was not yet possible to relieve in the convoys.

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15 October 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Night air reconnaissance spotted 1 submarine 20 miles southwest of Turkan at 0240. Otherwise nothing to report.

No enemy vessels were sighted in the Black Sea during the day. Below the Turkish coast near Giresun 2 freighters and 20 miles northwest of Tafra Darun the Turkish passenger ship [illegible] of about 5,000 tons.

Enemy shipping in port:

Gholenjik: 10 motor minesweepers, 10 M.T.B.s, 6 small armed vessels, 20 motor landing boats, 8 coastal vessels and lighters and about 25 small boats.

Novorossisk: 4 motor landing boats, 3 motor boats and 5 small boats. In the Sea of Azov no enemy shipping traffic was observed.

Ssadki: 30 boats, partly ashore.

Primorsk Akhtari: 6 naval gun boats, 1 M.T.B., 2 coastal vessels and about 100 boats.

Kamychevtka: 11 boats.

Yeisk: 1 motor gun boat and 75 boats in the harbor and east of the mole; in the railroad station 25 cars with 1 small boat each (probably motor landing boat).

Main naval S/S Station intercepted movements of mainly M.T.B.s and motor minesweepers in the northern part of the east coast; in the southern part normal patrol activity.

Submarines: 5 in the northwestern Black Sea and the area west and southwest of the Crimea, 1 in the southwestern Black Sea and 2 in unknown positions.

Own Situation:

No patrol lines and no E-boat operations during the night of 14/15 October on account of the weather.

1 naval ferry barge put out from Theodosia at 0245 to transport material to Cape Chauda where it was urgently needed for the construction of a battery position.

The overland communication to the Arabatka headland being interrupted owing to the weather 1 naval ferry barge is commissioned from Genichesk in order to supply the troops on the headland.

Simferopol at 0930: Weather forecast:

Eupatoria: Wind northeast to north, force 4, in the northern part force 6. Delta to Novorossisk: Wind east to southeast, force 4 to 3. Sea of Azov: Wind east, force 4 to 5. For the whole area: Cloudy, local showers, visibility 8 to 10 miles.

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15 October 1943

By request of High Command, Navy, Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Fleet Branch concerning losses of and experiences with motor ferry barges and Siebel ferries and also naval landing craft (guns) we report as follows:

"10 combined operations ferries (Siebel ferries) were lost in the Black Sea near the west coast between Varna and Burgas on account of bad weather in the period from July to October. It has proved that Siebel ferries cannot be employed in operations at the open sea and that is the reason why they were no longer used. Losses occurred because the boats were swamped or ran around. (Partly losses were caused by unreliable machinery). Naval ferry barges have not been lost by bad weather. They are much better fit for transportation over sea than Siebel ferries, because the latter can only take small quantitites of cargo on account of their small freeboard lest even by a little swell the deck is overflooded and the cargo goes outboard, while in the naval ferry barges the car is secured in a closed hold. Setting aside their minor seaworthiness the naval landing craft (guns) have turned out well as fighting vessels. First of all the little sea-worthiness is due to the too weak connection between the individual pontoons by which leaks are caused. It must be possible to correct this failure by a changed construction.

No experiences are available concerning the Siebel ferries as fighting vessels. Naval landing craft (guns) were not employed for the transportation of loads but were successfully employed in several cases as mine carriers for LMB mines in offensive mine operations in the Sea of Azov. On account of the small height of the mines the 8.8 cm. guns could be operated without trouble but the operation of the guns was partly hampered when the naval landing craft (guns) were employed as freight carriers.

Naval Harbor Master Kherson is informed of the blasting of the coffer-dam in Sapor shje and is instructed to take measures preventing damages or losses of vessels when the flood current will arrive.

Motor minesweeper R 166 with 15 combined operations assault boats put out from Balaklava at 1150 and put in to Sevastopol at 1425.

River minesweepers FR 2,4,7 and 8 put out from Sulina at 1415 and proceeded Danube upstream. According to orders they separate from the command of the Admiral Black Sea.

Ship 19 and 3 boats of the 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla are commissioned for submarine chase in Eupatoria Bay and put out from Sevastopol at 1530.

The patrol line between Ostrov-Birjuchi and Krabatska headland (as far as Chokrak) will be occupied with 3 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 naval ferry barges during the night of 15/16 October. The boats put out from Genichesk for the patrol line at 1630.

A large-scale convoy consisting of 48 vessels put out from Sevastopol to Ak Mechet at 1600 in order to loosen up Sevastopol.

[illegible]

15 October 1943

4 R. boats put out from Sevastopol to Yalta at 2300. According to orders they will carry out mine checks and afterwards will lay out minefields to Theodosia.

U-Boat Situation:

U-boat U 24 reported at 1 00: "Double and single shot missed a loaded coastal vessel of 800 tons close to Sukhum. Swell 1 to 2, depth 3 and 4 m with Hebin, aiming difficult on account of zigzagging. 1 Diesel engine broke down, repair perhaps possible in Sevastopol". 3 The U-boat has fired away all her torpedoes. U 24 is ordered therefore to throw a EMS mine in grid square of the Air Force 0326 and then to proceed to Sevastopol via western border of the operational area and zone "D".

The Italian flotilla of midget submarines reported after checking the damages which had occurred in the last operation that in the submarine CB 4 the battery had so much deteriorated owing to inrush of water on account of the bad weather that no further commissions of the boat are possible. With the next opportunity the boat is to be transferred to Constantza in order to change the battery.

The midget submarines CB 3 and 6 will be ready for action again in about 5 days.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping tasks in the Danube with mine-exploding vessel 193 and minesweeping planes without success.

Sevastopol: 2 FZ boats carried out checks for ground mines in the harbor entrance to Sevastopol.

Drifting mines were observed near Cape Meganon and Cape Mitidor.

Supply Traffic:

The scheduled convoys which were ready for start in the western Black Sea were rebound after the weather had improved.

[illegible]

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Admiral Black Sea
Br.k K. Gch. 26640

Appendix to War Diary Admiral Black Sea
from 1 to 15 October 1943 (on 10 Oct.)

Special order of the day !

Men of the Navy in the Black Sea !

The evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead has been finished successfully. The actions of the army during its occupation and evacuation have been highly appreciated in the army communiques and in the decrees of the commander-in-chiefs of the army group and the army and also your performances, the performances of the navy, have been mentioned with honor.

This evening the numerous combined operations boats under the protection of naval forces safely entered a port in the rear. Thus this task of the navy has found its end. In this moment I feel it my special duty to remember all those who with indefatigable activity participated in the execution of all these combat missions.

First of all I express my fullest acknowledgments to the group commanders, commanders and the crews of the naval ferry barges of the 1st, 3rd and 5th Landing Craft Flotillas for their indefatigable, valiant and aggressive attitude in transport, escort and patrol service. In spite of repeated enemy attacks from the air and by naval forces the enemy did not succeed in disturbing the performance of transportation which was asked from you. Numerous enemy planes which you shot down speak of the accuracy of fire of your weapons.

The spirit of your endeavour can serve as a model.

In brave and tight grip the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla broke through the enemy barrages and cleared the mines thus opening up the way for the following formations.

Always naval landing craft (guns) were on the outposts in the most dangerous points, the S-boats rushed forward for security far out at sea in order to attack the enemy supply by the roots. We owe them that the enemy but rarely approached our coasts.

Boats of the 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and the harbor defense flotillas successfully assisted many times different formations in their tasks. Gratefully I mention the true companionship in arms with the Air Force, an indispensible condition in modern naval warfare.

To all of you thanks and acknowledgment.

Moreover I owe gratitude and acknowledgment to the troops and offices on land of the Navy as far as they were able to join our efforts, that is the Naval Port Commanders and Naval Harbor Master, the naval coastal artillery, the naval communications service, the naval fitting-out depots, especially Kerch, the sea transport offices, the weapon commands, the offices for construction, ordnance and weather report, the naval hospitals, the reinforced frontier guard control service (coast), to all of them and first of all in the harbors of Kerch, Anapa and Noworossisk. At last I express my gratitude to the Naval Shore Commander Caucasus, Captain Grottenauer, as the responsible leader.

Your performances give me the certainty that you will master every task which the Navy will have to carry out in the Black Sea in the future with perseverance, bravery and recklessness.
Headquarters, 10 October 1943.

Signed: Kiseritzky
Vice-Admiral
Commanding Admiral Black Sea

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Appendix to War Diary Admiral Black Sea
of 14 October 1943.

Admiral Black Sea
Book No. Chefsache 248 ..I. 14 October 1943.

To
Commander 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla
with copy to Naval Shore Commander Theodosia
to Naval Group South, Sofia

A.) Situation:

According to agents reports and by reason of the geographical character we have to reckon with enemy landings first of all on the bottle neck of the Kerch peninsula. On account of its steep coast the eastern half of the Bay of Theodosia is not suited for landings with heavy material. The western part is a sandy flat shore where landings, even with heavy material, are possible.

B.) For the protection of the harbor of Theodosia and the Bay of Theodosia from enemy landings the following orders are issued:

1.) The following barrages are to be laid:

a) Barrage "S 71"

Position: from 45° 01.2' north, 35° 27.7 east
to 45° 02.7' north, 35° 29.0' east.

Length of the barrage: 3360 meters.
Mine material: 113 mines of type F.C,
95 explosive floats.
Shape of the barrage: F.C-mines in double rows and in front of them to the east one row of explosive floats.
F.C-line distance in the row 60 meters,
Average mine distance 30 meters,
Distance of explosive floats about 36 meters.
Distance between rows 100 meters,
Depth-setting: F.C minus 1 meter,
explosive floats minus 4 meters.

b) Barrage "S 72"

Position: from 45° 03.4' north, 35° 28.6' east
to 45° 04.6' north, 35° 30.5' east.
Length of the barrage: 3360 meters,
Mine material: 90 mines of type F.C,
23 mines of type UMB,
94 explosive floats.
Shape of the barrage: F.C-UMB mines in double rows and in front of them to the east one row of explosive floats.
Mine distance in the row 60 meters,
Average mine distance 30 meters,
Distance of explosive mines about 36 meters,
Distance between rows 100 meters.
Depth-setting: F.C-UMB minus 1 meter,
explosive floats minus 4 meters.

2.) Available for minefield task:

a) as mine carriers: Naval ferry barges F 419, 445, 447 for the time being in Theodosia),

b) For checking the laying course and approach, for sounding and buoying the laying course for explosive floats the RA-boat group of the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla (proceeding to Theodosia according to Admiral Black Sea Gkdos 6608 AI of 14 October 1943).

3.) Mine material will be ready in Theodosia on 17 October in the morning.

4.) Mines are to be laid with navigational accuracy.

5.) Watchings are to be brought down by fire, auxiliary buoys are to be taken up.

6.) Commander of the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla is charged with the laying of the minefield. He composes and submits the laying orders.

7.) After having carried out the mine task minelaying report according to S.A.II., number) fig.II.).

Signed: K i e s e r i t z k y

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Appendix to War Diary Admiral Black Sea
of 3 October 1943.

Admiral Black Sea
Book No. Chefsache 241 AI.

3 October 1943.

To:

Naval Group Command South

Answer to Op. 823/43 Chefsache:

Position of LMB barrages in Kerch "K 11", "K 15" dependent on available mine material. LM mines with special device for 3 m water depth not yet arrived. For this reason the planned fouling of the southern point of Chushka with ground mines not possible up to now.

Signed: K i e s e r i t z k y

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Appendix to War Diary Admiral Black Sea
of 3 October 1943.

Admiral Black Sea
Book No. Chefsache 242 ..I.

3 October 1943

To:
Naval Group Command South

Answer to Cn. 5786 Gkdos:

On account of removal of troops and material from the jumping-off bases west of Cape Achilleon the barrage "K 8" has been transferred to the north until the last day of evacuation.

Position of the barrage:

from 45° 27.2' north, 36° 40.7' east
to 45° 27.2' north, 36° 45.5' east.

Signed: K i e s e r i t z k y

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Appendix to War Diary Admiral Black Sea
of 3 October 1943

Admiral Black Sea
Book No. Chefsache 243/43 II.

To:
Naval Shore Commander Caucasus Kerch
17th Army Corps c/o Naval Liaison Officer
49th Army Corps c/o Naval Liaison Officer
Army Group A c/o Naval Liaison Officer

Subject: Operation "Brunhild".

The following arrangement is made concerning the crossing traffic of the operation "Brunhild" in the last days:

1.) In the course of the operation "Brunhild" it must be reckoned from 3 October almost exclusively with troop transports and that in the northern part of the Kerch Strait. This crossing is considered as crossing a large river and carried out by the Commander Kerch Strait (orders as per Commander Kerch Strait Ia/Org. B.Nr. 334/43 Gkdos).

2.) In the framework of the operation "Brunhild" the Navy will have the following naval tasks:

a) Security of the Kerch Strait in the northern direction to the Sea of Azov as well as in the southern direction to the Black Sea and also the coast of the Taman Peninsula as far as it is still occupied by German troops.

b) Preparation of smoke-layers according to request of the 49th Army Corps.

c) Bombardment of land targets in understanding with the 49th Army Corps.

d) If in addition to that still available, preparation of freight capacity for the Commander Kerch Strait for crossing traffic.

e) Return transportation of the freight capacity from the Kerch area.

f) Preparation of the leaving of the last transport forces of the navy as well as of the army after the operation "Brunhild" will have been finshed. Naval Shore Commander Caucasus will immediately submit the outlines of orders in cooperation with commander of combined operations (verbal personal instructions of the Commanding Admiral Black Sea are referred to).

g) Barrage tasks (minefields) by the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla according to special orders of Admiral Black Sea. As far as the deployment will be dependent on the phases of the crossing traffic Naval Shore Commander Caucasus will give executive orders.

Signed: K i e s e r i t z k y

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Comments of Naval Group Command South concerning War Diary of Admiral Black Sea from 1 to 15 October 1943.

Referring to page 1323 of 4 October 1st paragraph:

In the beginning it was only a matter of the withdrawal of the reinforced frontier guard control service (coast) from the Kuban peninsula and the northern coast of the Sea of Azov. Concerning the plans to withdraw the reinforced frontier guard control service (coast) from the Crimea it must be stated:

The reinforced frontier guard control service (coast) is an additional troop to the coastal control which to a considerable extent has specialized in tasks in connection with military coastal guard to the seaward because the Navy had no other personnel at its disposal. In the course of time, therefore, the reinforced frontier guard control service (coast) has become an essential part of the coastal defense as the Admiral Black Sea correctly states. It must be said, however, with regard to the critical situation in the Crimea that the guard control service is not an outstanding fighting troop. That is also the reason why it can only conditionally be commissioned in sections where it must be reckoned with combat activity. Taking into account of short time activity in order to avert an acute danger there will be tasks of urgent nature for the guard control service for instance in the Adriatic Sea where still the entire coast is almost in occupied, and these tasks will may better justice to its value and readiness for operation.

Referring to page 1343 of 8 October., from 1630 hours to page 1345, and page 1347 of 9 October and following pages:

The evacuation of the Kuban bridgehead as well as the successful removal of the embarked boats are a noteworthy performance of the commissioned formations of the Admiral Black Sea. It merits high acknowledgment for the operational command and organization as well as to its execution by the formations which participated in it.

Signed: F r i c k e

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3 December 1943

Naval Group Command South
Operations Staff
Br.Kdos. Nr. 6914 Gkdos

To:
Naval High Command, Naval Staff, Operations Division.

Berlin

Enclosed we submit War Diary of Admiral Black Sea from 1 to 15 October 1943 with comments of Naval Group Command South.

For Naval Group Command South:

Chief of Staff

Signed: Stange

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6 December 1943

Naval Group Command South
Operations Staff
Book No. 899/43 Chefs.

To:
Naval High Command, Naval Staff, Operations Division.

Berlin

Subject: War Diary of Admiral Black Sea from 1 to 15 October 1943.

Ref.: Our written Book No. 6914/43 Chefs of 3 December 1943.

Enclosed we submit appendices Chefsachen to War Diary of Admiral Black Sea from 1 to 15 October 1943. (Book Nos. Admiral Black Sea 248 Chefs. of 14 October, 241 Chefs. of 3 October, 242 Chefs. of 3 October, 243 Chefs. of 3 October).

For Naval Group Command South:
Chief of Staff
Signed: Stange

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War DIARY

of

Admiral, Black Sea

Commanding Admiral: Vice-Admiral K i e s e r i t z k y

Chief of Staff: Captain von C o n r a d y

16 - 31 October 1943

Appendices: 5 (2 of them attached separately as secret appendices)

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
Naval History Division
Washington 25, D. C.

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16 October 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Towards 0715 morning air reconnaissance sighted one submarine 5 miles south of Cape Tarkan and another 80 miles north of Samsun. The Turkish passenger ship M.K.R. (4,765 tons) was sighted off the Turkish coast, course west.

Shipping in the ports in the Sea of Azov:

Primorsko: 6 large motor gunboats, 1 M.T.B., 2 small coastal vessels and about 60 boats, some beached.

Yeisk: 1 small motor gunboat, 15 naval landing boats and 45 small boats.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported slight activity of small vessels off the central to southern parts of the East Coast, but increasing activity off the northern part of the East Coast.

8 submarines were detected in radio traffic: 5 in the northwestern Black Sea and the area south and southwest of the Crimea, 2 in the southwestern Black Sea and 1 in the eastern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Nothing to report from the boats on patrol in the Kerch Strait and south of Genichesk off the Arabatskaya headland on the night of 15/16 October. The boats put in to Kerch and Genichesk respectively.

Simferopol at 0900:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Novorossisk and the Sea of Azov:

Wind east to southeast, force 3, mainly overcast, visibility 6-10 miles, early haze.

Western Black Sea:

Ship 19 and 3 submarine chasers on anti-submarine patrol off Cape Tarkan reported a depth charge attack at noon on a submarine which was located 20 miles southwest of Tarkan. Oil, air bubbles and pieces of wood appeared on the surface. Ship 19 considered that the submarine was destroyed. The boats proceeded to Sevastopol to take in more depth charges.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast was ordered to despatch the first large convoy of combined operations boats, comprising 3 formation, from Sevastopol to Nikolaiev on 16 October.

The towed convoy of 39 vessels, which was proceeding from Sevastopol to Odessa via Ak Mechet, put in to Ak Mechet from 1100 to 1600. The convoy continued passage but had to return to Ak Mechet at 1800 on account of poor visibility.

16 October 1943

South Coast of the Crimea:

Naval ferry barge F 536 was ordered to put out from Theodosia at 1630 for Sevastopol as the leading boat of "Wiking 2" convoy. The convoy comprised 4 naval ferry barges, 6 Siebel ferries, 16 combined operations boats, 9 heavy assault boats and tug ISSEL with naval landing craft (guns) No. 4 in tow. If the good weather continued, the convoy was to proceed direct to its destination, otherwise the vessels were to call at Yalta or Balaklava as intermediate ports.

Naval ferry barge F 583 was ordered to proceed from Yalta to Sevastopol at 1630 on 16 October with the 6th operational group. The operational group consisted of combined operations boats and landing boats.

Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was ordered to have the group of motor minesweeper (R.) which arrived in Yalta at 0700 continue to Theodosia at nightfall. The "Wiking 2" convoy put out from Theodosia at 1625 as scheduled. (1 Siebel ferry put in again at 1810 on account of engine trouble).

The 6th Group of naval ferry barges comprising combined operations boats put out from Yalta for Sevastopol as scheduled at 1630. 4 motor minesweepers (R.) of 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla put out from Yalta for Theodosia at 1710.

It has since been reported from Kerch Strait that 5th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613 was shelled from Cape Ilia at 1130 on 15 October. Hits were scored on the battery, but there were no casualties. 1st Battery at Cape Takil reported 3 guns ready for action.

Regarding the shelling of the coast at Opuk (see War Diary of 15 October) it has been determined that the action was probably carried out by M.T.B.s or motor gunboats in the Kamennoi sector. (No further details available).

At 1630 4 harbor defense boats put out from Kerch for the patrol line in Kerch Strait.

Sea of Azov:

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to report the planned bombardment of the enemy front and concentrations near Kirilovka and Stepanovka (see War Diary, 11 October), either on the night of 16/17 October in moonlight or on 17 October at dawn.

Naval Liaison Officer to Army Group A was informed of the plan to shell the north coast of the Sea of Azov. He was also told that possible joint operations had already been suggested to 49th Army Corps via Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine. Discussion with the Local Commanding Officer is scheduled for today.

16 October 1943

Some days ago I had already decided to shell the enemy front of the north coast of the Sea of Azov, and in that connection had ordered Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine to contact 44th Army Corps. However, it has so far been impossible to carry out the operation as bad weather has prevented the operation of the naval landing craft (guns). Naval Liaison Officer now reports that Army Group A anticipates naval attacks also in conjunction with the expected land offensive against Melitopol. For that reason operation of naval forces would be welcome. The measures which I had already decreed to relieve the Army front met this request.

Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force was informed that Offensive operations of naval forces from Genichesk against enemy positions, batteries, concentrations of shipping etc. between Kirilovka and Berdyansk, could not be carried out without daily air reconnaissance of the ports and coast in the northern Sea of Azov. This also applied to the occupation of the patrol lines off Arabatskaya and Biriuchi.

Another request was made for daily reconnaissance of the ports of Berdyansk, Mariupol and, if possible, also Taganrog. Aerial photographs of enemy positions, batteries and supply bases between Kirilovka and Berdyansk from the coast approximately as far as 5 km inland were also requested.

Reference the proposed bombardment of the enemy front on the north coast of the Sea of Azov, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported that it was to be carried out by 4 naval landing craft (guns) in cooperation with an army combat unit stationed at Kirilovka. The plan is: first, to fire about 800 round on Russian battery positions at Stepanovka and then about 400 rounds on positions on the Molochno isthmus.

Naval Shore Commander has appointed a liaison officer with radio operator to the combat group. The operation will begin provisionally at 0130 on 17 October and finish at 0315. The Rumanian fighter squadron has been requested to provide fighter protection for the return passage.

At 1600 4 naval landing craft (guns) put out from Genichesk for the above operation; 3 naval ferry barges also put out for the patrol line off the Arabatskaya headland.

U-boat Situation:

At 0354 U 24 reported from the minelaying position: "TMB mines laid as planned, grid square 0326, wind eastsoutheast, force 4, 1019 millibars". According to radio intercept reports, Russian M.T.B.s were directed to proceed to this position, as an unidentified vessel was believed to be there. The object of transmitting from the mined area has therefore been achieved. U 24 then commenced return passage to Sevastopol as ordered.

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16 October 1943

Enemy Air Activity:

At about 0745 7 bombers and 4 fighters carried out a low-level attack on Theodosia and Cape Ilia from an altitude of 150 meters; they dropped about 15 bombs and machine-gunned ships lying in the roads. No damage.

Cape Chauda was raided at 1230 and 1240. 4 bombs fell 200 meters northeast of the lighthouse; field positions and the lighthouse were machine-gunned; no casualties.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Mine exploding vessel No. 193 and minesweeping planes swept for mines as scheduled. No mines swept.

Sevastopol: FZ-boats with towed loop gear swept the area off the harbor entrance 16 times for round mines; no mines swept.

Yalta: The group of motor minesweepers (R.) swept the harbor approaches with orpesa gear, no mines swept.

The Odessa - Ochakov route, which was closed on account of suspected mines, was re-opened to shipping.

Supply Traffic:

For initial evacuation convoys from Sevastopol, see above. The transfer convoys, each comprising 30 combined operations boats escorted by 5 naval ferry barges, put out from Sevastopol for Nikolaiev at 1515, 1545 and 1615.

Convoys in the western Black Sea as scheduled, without incident.

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17 October 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

No enemy shipping was sighted during daylight reconnaissance in the Black Sea. There was no reconnaissance of the Caucasus coast, Taman peninsula and east coast of the Sea of Azov on account of the weather. 1 2000 ton freighter was sighted off the Turkish coast 18 miles northwest of Inebolu and 1 1000 ton freighter 20 miles north of Kurukasil, both on easterly course.

Main Naval D/F Station reported slight activity of small vessels along the whole East Coast during daylight; activity increased in the evening. At about 2000 1 unidentified vessel, probably a small surface unit, was detected in radio traffic 40 miles south of Cape Opuk.

8 submarines were detected in radio traffic: 4 in the northwestern Black Sea and south and southwest of the Crimea, 2 in the southwestern Black Sea and 2 in the eastern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Yalta: wind north to northwest, force 3 to 4, showers, visibility 4 - 6 miles.

Yalta to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: wind east to southeast, force 3, overcast, showers, visibility 6 miles.

Western Black Sea:

Twice in the course of the day enemy planes attacked the large three-part convoy of combined operations boats proceeding from Sevastopol to Nikolaiev. The first attack took place at about 0930 southeast of Cape Tarkan when two torpedo planes dropped 3 aerial torpedoes and carried out machine-gun attacks. One aerial torpedo hit naval ferry barge NFP No. 418, destroying the after part of the ship. Officer in Charge of the convoy, at the same time acting Senior Officer, 3rd Landing Craft Flotilla, was wounded; the craft was taken in tow by naval ferry barge NFP 406, and put in to Ak Mechet at 1800. The second air attack took place about 1345 northwest of Cape Tarkan outside the range of our fighters. 5 torpedo planes dropped 5 aerial torpedoes, no hits were scored; enemy planes made off to the south. The convoy continued passage as ordered and was instructed to proceed eastwards to the headland at Skadovsk if the weather deteriorates.

The towed convoy, comprising 39 vessels and proceeding from Sevastopol to Ochakov put in again to Ak Mechet the previous day on account of poor visibility. It should put out from Ak Mechet at 1800 on 17 October to continue passage to Ochakov.

E-boat S 47 which had been undergoing engine overhaul at Constantza was ready for action again and should put to sea for Ivan Baba at 1700.

After taking in 6 more depth charges ship 19 and 3 submarine chasers put out again from Sevastopol at 1810 for anti-submarine patrol west of the Crimea.

17 October 1943

South Coast of the Crimea:

The 6th Naval Ferry Barge Group consisting of Siebel ferries put in to Sevastopol at 0510 from Yalta. The "Viking 2" - convoy proceeding from Theodosia to Sevastopol with the last of the combined operations boats, put in to Balaklava at 1320 on account of the weather and engine trouble. The convoy scheduled to continue passage at 2400.

The authorities concerned were informed of the minelaying operations in Theodosia Bay.

Nothing to report from patrol in the Kerch Strait in the night of 16/17 October.

At 0700 3 naval ferry barges put in to Genichesk from patrol between Ostrov - Biriuchi and the Arabatskaia headland.

Nothing to report.

At 1030 4 naval landing craft (uns) returned after having shelled the northern coast of the Sea of Azov as scheduled.

During approach winds about eastnortheast force 5 - 6, fairly rough sea. From 0145 to 0210 3 naval landing craft (uns) shelled Stepanovka from a range of 3,000 to 7,5000 meters. Heavy fires were observed in the village and vicinity. There was no return fire. From 0240 to 0312 4 naval landing craft (uns) shelled the Molochne Isthmus from the western boundary of Stepanovka to the Russian main defense line from a range of 4,500 meters. Numerous fires were observed in the vicinity of Stepanovka and small isolated fires on the isthmus. Heavy artillery in the region of Stepanovka returned the fire with single shots and there was machine-gun fire from the isthmus. No damage or casualties. The naval landing craft (uns) shipped a lot of water on the outward passage.

Naval Liaison Officer attached to Army Combat Group reported that the bombardment caused the enemy to open lively fire against our main defense line. After the disembarkment a Russian assault party found the 1st Russian line abandoned.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to try to prevent the disembarkment on the night of 18 October.

At midday the naval landing craft (uns) were not ready to sail owing to the amount of water they had shipped. In any case, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine had reported that the naval landing craft (uns) could not put out on account of the weather and patrol off Arabatskaia headland on the night of 17/18 October would also have to be cancelled.

It is now tried to arrange a disembarkment for the full wing night in an effort to bring relief to the hard pressed troops at Melitopol.

CONFIDENTIAL

17 October 1943

U-boat Situation:

U-24 reported she would be off Sartch Point at about 0700 on 18 October.

Coastal defense was informed.

U 23 reported that her transmitter had been out of order which is the reason why the following radiogram was not transmitted until 17 October: "At 2131 on 15 October 1 steamer and 2 motor minesweepers on northerly course in 03292 (10 miles south of Suchum). 2,000 ton freighter, torpedoed, laden. Sea 2, depth 3, magnetic firing 1, foreward 10, high column after explosion, sinking not observed".

In view of the favorable position it could be assumed that the freighter certainly sank shortly afterwards.

Enemy Air Activity:

1 plane bombed and machine-gunned Theodosia and another Cape Chauda. No damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 and minesweeping planes swept for mines as scheduled; no mines swept. 29 check sweeps were made by minesweeping planes in the Berosanski channel without success. Motor minesweepers (R.) carried out preliminary sweeping in the minefields S 71 and S 72 off Theodosia.

Supply Traffic:

Convoys in the western Black Sea as scheduled. Nothing to report.

[redacted]

18 October 1943

Sinferopol Enemy Situation:

No shipping was sighted during daylight reconnaissance in the whole of the Black Sea yesterday. At about 1100 2 motor minesweepers and 3 motor landing boats were sighted off the Caucasus coast, 4 miles south of Noverossisk on easterly course.

Shipping in the ports (visual reconnaissance):

Anapa: 11 large and about 20 small naval landing boats; Noverossisk: 9 boats, Gelendjik: 6 motor minesweepers and 10 M.T.B.s, 8 coastal vessels and about 25 small boats, also 5 small armed vessels and 35 motor landing boats.

Taman: 14 motor landing boats. No enemy shipping in the Bay of Kerch in the forenoon. In port: Kerch: 25 boats; Fr.Marske - Anchter: 6 motor gunboats, 1 motor torpedo boat, 2 small coastal vessels and about 85 boats, some launches. Kerch Canal: 8 pontoon ferries and 21 landing boats. No reconnaissance of Yeisk on account of the weather.

The reconnaissance plane located a submarine 45 miles southwest of Sevastopol at 0622.

Admiral Naval C/F Station reported only very slight activity of small vessels off the East Coast.

In the course of the day altogether 7 submarines were detected in radio traffic 4 in the area west and southwest of the Crimea, 2 in the central and 1 in the southwestern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Duty Patrol Malta:

Wind's northwest to west, force 3, Malta - Noverossisk and Bay of Kerch: Winds south to southeast, force 3.

General forecast: Overcast, local showers, visibility 3 - 5 miles.

All three parts of the large "Kumbus" - convoy passed Dondra head during the morning and had all put in to Ochakov by 1530.

The convoy comprising the remaining combined operations craft put in to Sevastopol at 0745 from the Basin.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimea Coast was ordered to assemble the Whalhaes convoy and to arrange the transfer of the combined operations craft lying in Sevastopol immediately.

The "Whalhaes" convoy will be divided into 2 parts, the first to leave Sevastopol at 1515, the second at 1605. Both parts will be escorted to Nikolaiev by 5 naval ferry barges.

At 1515 Ships 19 and 3 submarine chasers put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine patrol and convoy escort west of the Crimea. Ship 19 was unfortunately the presence of the submarine detected during the afternoon and was ordered to patrol until the morning of 19 October when the scheduled convoys had passed Cape Tarkan.

[redacted]

18 October 1943

Planes should also provide close escort and anti-submarine patrol for the convoys from dawn on 19 October.

On 17 October the convoy of combined operations boats between Cape Kitchkar and Sartch Point reported that 5 bombs were dropped a considerable distance from the convoy. Investigation revealed that a coastal battery had been engaged on practice firing with live ammunition. Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported that the range could in no way have effected the convoy. However, as this was indeed the case, Naval Shore Commander, Crimea was ordered to insure that in future coastal batteries did not carry out firing practice (using either live or sub-caliber ammunition) during the passage of convoys. Coastal batteries should be advised of convoys beforehand.

It was expected that Russian motor torpedo boats would appear off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula and that isolated gunboats would shell the coast between Cape Opuk and Cape Chauda in the coming nights. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was therefore ordered to send 3 naval ferry barges to patrol route Brown from Point 15 to 16 on the night of 18/19 October, provided that the minelaying operation (The Basin Bay) had been carried out as scheduled on the afternoon of 18 October.

Visibility conditions prevented the minelaying operation on 18 October, patrol was therefore cancelled. The minelaying operation was ordered to be carried out in the early morning hours of 19 October and 20 October.

The net barrage at Yalta which was destroyed during the storms last week, could not be put back in its former position, as the inner net barrage section which closed the entrance, could not be repaired.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that the 5th Army Corps planned to demolish the following harbor installations on the Kerch peninsula:

All wooden bridges outside the harbor, Klenka jetty, naval harbor of Ak-Burnu, Pavlovski Harbor; ore pier, embarkation pier and submarine harbor at Kamysh Burun, fishing harbor and northern jetty at Kerch.

The southern Jetty and sea transport pier will not be destroyed.

Since these measures are of a fundamental nature, I shall make no decision for the time being; Naval Group South has been asked to obtain the decision of Naval Staff. I agree with the suggestions, however, but I consider that in addition to the southern jetty and sea transport pier at Kerch, 200 meters of the loading pier at Kamysh Burun should also be preserved to serve as emergency embarkation point.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that the Russians fired at mines between Panchia and Shelesny Rog. Our own guns opened up on the boats in turn.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 October 1943

On the night of 18/19 October 3 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 combined operations motor boats should patrol the line from Dirjuchi to Chokrak. They should put to sea from Genichesk at 1600.

In response to an inquiry from Naval Hight Commander, ordering transfer of naval ferry barges to the Aegean area it was reported as follows:

Naval ferry barges available: 89, 6 of them not yet commissioned (not counting 6 gun carriers coming from Germany) and 3 to be handed over to the Rumanians. At present out of action: 13; not fully ready for action: 22. Therefore 48 naval ferry barges at present ready for action.

11 new craft are projected by the end of 1943 under the construction program. 6 of these craft under construction at Linz are not likely to be completed in time.

Tasks: The main task of the naval ferry barges is as transports; owing to the changed situation the Army requires increased supplies in the Crimea. In addition there are escort assignments particularly in the western Black Sea, where they are having to deputize more and more for the 30th Escort Flotilla.

Another task is the operation of naval ferry barges as gun carriers for reconnaissance and coastal patrol, the strength of these operations depending on the enemy situation.

The naval ferry barges (mines) are used for minelaying assignments.

In order to accomplish the above tasks particularly the transport and escort assignments, a minimum of 90 landing craft are needed in the Black Sea, the more so as experience has shown that the number of craft not fully ready for action increases during the winter because of the bad weather. It seems therefore that no naval ferry barges can be spared unless there are more than 90 available (including naval ferry barges (guns) and the number of craft fully ready for action is favorable.

According to reports received from Port Commanders, navigational information and data aboard naval ferry barges incomplete and inaccurate. The commands of the Naval Ferry Barge Flotillas were ordered to examine the data and charts available and to report when this had been carried out.

In view of the losses in recent air attacks due to the fact that vessels were anchored too close together in port, all Naval Shore Commanders and Flotillas were ordered to see that boats were made fast in port as far apart as possible and that particularly valuable vessels such as such as submarines, E-boats and motor minesweepers were camouflaged.

U-Boat Situation:

At 1130 U 24 put in to Sevastopol to refuel and for repairs to Diesel engine. After investigation of the repairs needed the boat reported she would be ready for action again on 19 October.

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18 October 1943

The Italian midget submarines CB 3 and CB 6 were still out of operation because of torpedo failures. A German artificer Petty Officer of the 1st E-Boat flotilla (formerly the 11st E-Boat flotilla, who was familiar with Italian 45 cm torpedoes was sent to put it right.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Mine exploding vessel M , 193 and minesweeping planes swept for mines as scheduled. No mines swept. Sevastopol: FZ boats carried out a check sweep for ground lines with towed loop gear off the harbor entrance to Sevastopol; no mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

Crimean convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea as scheduled. Nothing to report.

19 October 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

3 motor minesweepers, 2 motor barrage boats and 2 coastal vessels on northerly course were detected during night reconnaissance 5 miles south of Anapa.

No enemy shipping was observed during daylight reconnaissance in the Black Sea. 2 freighters and 1 steamer carrying troops, were sighted on westerly course off the Turkish coast.

Caucasus coast off Anapa: 1 motor minesweeper, 1 coastal vessel and 1 lighter, stopped. In Anapa harbor: 3 motor minesweepers, 5 small armed vessels, 5 naval landing boats, 1 coastal vessel and 2 small boats.

Photographic reconnaissance of the ports of Batum and Poti revealed the following:

Batum: 3 cruisers, 3 destroyers (2 of them not yet completed) and 1 destroyer hull, 5 torpedo boat hulls, 5 submarines, 1 minesweeper, 6 M.T.B.s, 4 motor minesweepers and 1 patrol boat, 4 7,000 - ton tankers, 8 freighters totaling 24,5000 tons, including one 8,5000 - ton passenger ship, in addition 1 ice-breaker, 6 coastal vessels and 5 barges, as well as about 35 small boats.

Poti: 1 battleship, 1 cruiser, 4 destroyers, 1 torpedo boat, 2 minesweepers, 10 submarines, 8 motor minesweepers and 4 M.T.B.s, also 1 heavy cruiser hull, 1 passenger ship and 13 freighters totaling 46,000 tons, as well as numerous coastal vessles, barges and small boats.

The vessels identified as uncompleted destroyers at Batum are probably uncompleted torpedo boats, as it is difficult to distinguish between them in an aerial photograph. Thus there is little change since the last reconnaissance of Poti and Batum.

CONFIDENTIAL

19 October 1943

Main Naval D/F Station Eupatoria reported that according to radio traffic there were no large surface forces at sea. Only slight activity of small vessels off the East Coast; off the northern East Coast moderate activity of M.T.B.s and motor minesweepers.

9 submarines were detected: 4 submarines south and southwest of the Crimea, 1 in the southeastern Black Sea and 3 in the eastern Black Sea, as well as 1 submarine in unidentified position.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:

Winds northeast to east, force 3 - 4, fair, visibility 15 miles, during the night fog patches.

The large "Walhalla" convoy, preceding in two parts and comprising the rest of the combined operations craft passed Cape Tarkan between 0730 and 0750 and proceeded to Nikolaiev as planned. About 0750 2 torpedo planes attacked the convoy with aerial torpedoes 5 miles west of Tarkan; no damage.

As the result of a change in operational orders, the combined operations boats will be divided, some proceeding to Nikolaiev and some to Kherson. The large convoy which arrived in Ochakov the previous day continued passage to Nikolaiev according to plan, arriving there at 1800 on 18 October.

According to radio intelligence messages from enemy reconnaissance planes were transmitted to 7 enemy submarines in the operational area.

Shortly after 2000, the radar station at Cape Takil took bearings on what appeared to be heavy enemy units at sea; 3 - 4 miles south of Cape Takil and 5 miles south of Zhelesny Rog.

The 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to have all boats put to sea immediately to patrol 5 - 8 miles off the coast in an easterly direction as far as the Kerch area. Later reports stated that the enemy was withdrawing to the south, so orders were given that only 3 boats should put out.

At 2230 E-boats S 28, S 42 and S 45 put out from Ivan Baba and proceeded 5 miles off shore in an easterly direction; S 42 returned at 2355 on account of engine trouble.

On the night of 19 October 3 landing craft (Siebel) and the group of motor minesweepers (R1) of the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla laid minefield S 71 in Theodosia Bay as scheduled. The boats anchored in the roads in Theodosia Bay, as a delay minefield S 72 on the night of 19/20 October.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimea Coast at Sevastopol was ordered to transfer 4 naval ferry barges of the 3rd Naval Ferry Barge Flotilla from Sevastopol to Theodosia as soon as possible. The boats will be at the disposal of the Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus for patrol duty south of the Kerch Peninsula.

CONFIDENTIAL

19 October 1943

On the night of 19 October harbor defense boats took up patrol line in the Kerch Strait; nothing to report.

3 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 combined operations boats patrolled the line between Ostriv-Birjuchi and Arabatskaia headland in the Sea of Azov on the night of 18/19 October. Nothing to report. The same patrol will be carried out by 3 naval ferry barges and 2 combined operations boats on the night of 19/20 October.

The bombardment of Konstantinovka on the Azov coast planned for tonight has, at the suggestion of the Army been postponed until the following night (20 October) so that the Rumanian divisions on the coast could be warned in time. The bombardment was intended to upset the enemy on the southern front and to destroy, if possible, vessels lying in the river mouth.

The Arabatskaia headland and the northeastern Section of the Crimea were handed over to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus by Naval Shore Commander, Crimea on 16 October in accordance with orders from Admiral, Black Sea dated 14 October.

U-Boat Situation:

Extract from short report from U 24, 7th enemy operation, part one: 3 - 7 October lively coastal shipping in the direction of Tuapse consisting of motor landing boats, motor launches and fishing cutters.

3 destroyers, 1 torpedo boat, 1 minesweeper and several motor gun boats going to and from Tuapse passed out of range. Double torpedo shot at a 700-ton coastal vessel missed because of incorrect estimation and too great a range. Normal surface patrol, moderate air patrol.

11 to 15 October heavy air patrol off Suchum. Fired double shot at an 800-ton coastal vessel in the inner harbor bay; range 1,400 meters, torpedo missed as the target changed course 120°. One torpedo exploded on land. Subsequently single shot from a range of 600 meters missed target, reason unknown. One E.S mine was laid off the bay.

Supply traffic is therefore still running, though mainly small vessels, which are very difficult, and even impossible, to hit with torpedoes; they can only be attacked with gunfire during the night because of the proximity of the coast.

U 24 will not be ready to sail from Sevastopol until 20 October. Because of delayed Diesel repairs.

Minesweeping Activity:

Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 and minesweeping planes swept for mines on the Danube, FZ boats off the harbor entrance to Sevastopol as scheduled; no mines swept.

CONFIDENTIAL

19 October 1943

Supply Traffic:

Convoys in the western Black Sea as scheduled. The steamer THEODERICH, proceeding from Nikolaiev to Odessa, ran aground on the evening of 18 October about 5 miles southwest of the Berezanski Canal, and could not be refloated, even with the help of several tugs. The cargo therefore had to be lightered. Crimea convoys according to schedule.

20 October 1943

Sinfor and Enemy Situation:

No enemy shipping was sighted during daylight reconnaissance over the central and western Black Sea. 1 troop transport and 3 freighters were sighted on easterly course off the Turkish coast between Samsun and Fraizon.

Moderate activity on the part of small vessels off the ports of Gholenjik, Cape Utrish and Anapa, on the Caucasus coast. Weather did not permit reconnaissance of the ports of Gholenjik and Novorossisk. Anapa: 6 motor minesweepers, 6 small armed vessels, 1 coastal vessel, and 11 naval landing craft. Taman: 9 motor landing boats and 3 pontoon ferries. Pizunda Point: 6 motor minesweepers off the coast. Sochi: 7 barges and 12 small boats, 7 coastal vessels and 5 floats.

No enemy shipping in the Sea of Azov.

Yeisk: 4 M.T.B.s, 31 naval landing craft, 4 tugs and 92 boats, some beached. Kalyshevatka: 26 boats, some beached. Primorsko: 9 M.T.B.s, 1 motor armed boat, 2 coastal vessels and 85 small boats. Gluchoi Canal (Temriuk): 1 M.T.B., 1 naval landing boat, 1 coastal vessel, 14 small boats and 25 pontoon ferries.

Main Naval D/F Station reported moderate activity on the part of motor torpedo boats and motor minesweepers off the northern East Coast, and moderate activity of small vessels off the central and southern East Coast.

2 submarines, exact position unknown, were located in the western Black Sea, 3 submarines in the eastern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:

Winds northeast to east, fair, visibility 12 miles, fog patches.

3 submarine chasers left the operational area off Eupatoria at 0000, headed for Constantza for minor repairs; Ship 19 returning from anti-submarine patrol put in to Sevastopol at 0500. The investigation which was ordered into the possible destruction of a submarine during convoy escort duty west of Cape Tarkan on 16 October (see War Diary 16 October) has been carried out. Echo-sounding and search gear confirmed that the object still lying fast on the bottom at the same spot, and that there was still a large streak of oil visible.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 October 1943

It may therefore be assumed that an enemy submarine was destroyed. Definite confirmation cannot be given before the arrival of the combat report.

The large convoy comprising the rest of the combined operations boats put in to Nikolaiev in the course of the day as scheduled.

Motor minesweepers R 35 and R 203 put in to Nikolaiev at 1100 for dockyard overhaul.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea had been ordered to transfer 1 motor minesweeper to Sevastopol immediately, so as to bring the Crimea force up to its previous strength of 3 boats.

3 boats of the 1st E-boat Flotilla patrolled the south coast of the Crimea in the night of 20 October after the sighting of enemy forces south of Cape Takil (see War Diary 19 October). The boats put in to Ivan Baba again at 0215 without having sighted the enemy.

The 1st E-boat Flotilla was ordered to transfer S 42 and S 45 to Constantza for engine overhaul and change of screw respectively. The boats left Ivan Baba for Constantza at 1530, and will probably be ready for action again on 24 October. The 1st E-boat Flotilla was ordered to transfer 4 MAS boats to Nikolaiev via Ochakov for repairs. The boats put out from Ivan Baba at 0200 and arrived at Sevastopol at 1635; the boats anchored a short while in Sudak Bay as S 504 developed engine trouble.

The 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was ordered to transfer the R 1 group of motor minesweepers from Theodosia to Sevastopol, and sweeping route Brown with troops clear at the same time. The 4 boats left Theodosia at 1700.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was ordered to transfer the E-boat escort ship RO 41 to Constantza immediately, where she would be at the disposal of Commander, Convoys and Escorts for minelaying assignments.

Minefield S 72 in Theodosia Bay was laid in the early morning hours according to schedule.

Nothing to report from the patrol in the Kerch Strait on the night of 20 October.

At 2025 radiogram was received from Radar Station ...7(Cape Takil), reporting enemy forces in the southern part of the Kerch Strait. At 2040 Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that the Customs Frontier Guard on the coast at Durnaly heard the noise of engines out to sea about 8 - 10 km south of Opuk.

The 1st E-boat Flotilla was at once ordered to send 3 boats to patrol in the southern Kerch Strait, 3 - 5 miles offshore in an easterly direction as far as the longer area. At 2150 Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that weak enemy forces had landed 12 km east of Cape Chauda. The 1st E-boat Flotilla was informed and ordered to operate against the landing places and to report the strength of the enemy. The 3 E-boats put out at 2230; delay in the departure was due to an air raid warning at the flotilla base.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 October 1943

Following an order for all vessels to stand by, at 2310 Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to send 3 naval ferry barges to patrol between Cape Claudia and a point 10 miles to the eastward, keeping 3 miles off shore. The 1st E-boat Flotilla was informed.

It seems that the enemy carried out reconnaissance and other preparations for the landing on the Kerch peninsula last night already, an assumption which is supported by reports from No. 7 Radar Station on the evening of 19 October (see War Diary of 19 October). The fact that the E-boats did not sight any enemy forces on the night of 19 October leads to the conclusion that the enemy was only feeling out the land.

Nothing to report from the patrol line between Ostrov-Biriuchi and Arabatskaia Headland on the night of 20 October.

At the request of the 44th Army Corps, the Naval Shore Commander Ukraine was ordered to postpone the withdrawal of Primorski-Konstantinovka and river mouth ly 3 naval ferry barges and 3 landing craft (guns) until the night of 20 October. Attention was drawn to the barges considered important for the Army.

At 1400 3 landing craft (guns) and 3 naval ferry barges put out from Genichesk for the operation.

2 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 combined operations boats should carry out patrol on the night of 19/20 October.

U-boat Situation:

At 0800 U 24 put out from Sevastopol for the second half of her 7th operation.

Minesweeping Activity:

Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 and minesweeping planes swept for mines on the Danube, FZ-boats off Sev Stopol as scheduled.

Additional report for 19 October: Minesweeping planes carried out several check sweeps off Ochakov. One mine was swept 3 miles south of Ochakov (depth of water 3 meters, altitude 30 meters, column of water 60 meters).

Supply Traffic:

Crimean convoys and escorts on the western Black Sea as scheduled. Nothing to report.

21 October 1943

Reinforced Enemy Situation:

No enemy shipping was sighted during daylight reconnaissance in the central and western Black Sea. 1 freighter off the Turkish port of Trabzon, and 1 freighter and 1 passenger ship off Giresun. No reconnaissance of the Caucasus coast and ports was possible as the planes developed engine trouble.

CONFIDENTIAL

21 October 1943

Shipping in the port of Primorsko unchanged compared with the previous day; Kosk 1 additional motor gun boat.

Main Naval D/F Station reported moderate activity of M.F.B.s and motor minesweepers off the northern East Coast, which increased during the night.

3 submarines were detected in the area west and southwest of the Crimea and 1 submarine in the southwestern Black Sea.

The Radar Station at Cape Chroni reported: 2130 enemy naval forces 13 miles northwest of Cape Chroni; 2200 enemy M.F.B.s proceeding at high speed on westerly course; 3 miles north of Cape Chroni. It was later established that there was only one boat which was apparently headed for Cape Ili.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Noverossisk and Sea of Azov: Winds northeast to east, force 3, fair, visibility 15 miles, in the morning fog patches.

The last combined operations boats to be transferred from Sevastopol put in to Nikolaiev and Kherson respectively, in accordance with the amendment of Army orders. Transfer was thus complete. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast was ordered to have the MAS-boats S 502, S 504 and S 505 proceed to Nikolaiev via Ochakov. The 4 boats put out from Sevastopol at 1000.

The cargo of steamer THEODERICH which ran aground of Ochakov, was lightered, so that the steamer could then be towed off (see War Diary of 20 October). The 1st Air Corps was asked for fighter cover or other close escort, since an enemy reconnaissance plane flew over the steamer.

The M group of 4 motor minesweepers put in to Sevastopol at 1130 from Theodosia.

Following the reports of enemy landings 12 km east of Cape Chauda (see War Diary 20 October), the 3 naval ferry barges put out from Theodosia for patrol as scheduled. 3 boats of the 1st E-boat Flotilla had put to sea already at 2230.

These (1 boat with 4 cm guns and 2 with 2 cm guns) were informed of the operation of the naval ferry barges and ordered to withdraw to the seaward at 0330.

The 3 E-boats steered for the reported landing place at 0018, but did not sight any vessels offshore, but only weak gunfire. At 0058 the boats took up lurking position 3 miles offshore. At 0130 they sighted 3 unboats and 3 or 4 vessels, probably M.F.B.s on east to southeasterly course, medium speed about 3,500 meters off Cape Chauda. High swell and unfavorable moonlight (from the south) made attack impossible.

In heavy fog they commenced return to Ivan Baba at 0230, arriving at 0330.

CONFIDENTIAL

21 October 1943

The naval ferry barges could not reach the ordered patrol line behind Cape Chauda in the thick fog despite two attempts, and put in to Theodosia again at 0515.

According to an Army report, the enemy landed about 250 men and left the landing place again at 0400 after embarking the troops. In addition, about 15 to 20 enemy transport planes were said to have flown over the area continuously, probably parachuting troops into the area Stary-Crimea, Sudak and Vaila mountains (partisan territory).

The following operational order was issued for the night of 21 October:

4 boats of the 1st E-boat Flotilla to patrol on a bearing of 200°, 2 to 7 miles off Cape Opuk in groups of 2 boats each. The 1st E-boat Flotilla was ordered to put out from Ivan Baba at 1530 and to pass Cape Chauda at a range of 5 miles.

3 naval ferry barges (1st Group) to patrol the line from 45° North, 36° East, 1 - 4 miles to the eastward. 3 naval ferry barges (2nd Group to patrol the line from 45° North, 36° East, 0 - 3 miles to the westward.

1st Group should put out from Theodosia at 1530, the second Group at 1600.

The naval ferry barges were to patrol in close formation. Should enemy forces be contacted, they were to be attacked immediately and reported.

If no contact with the enemy was made the boats were to return at 0330 on 22 October without further orders.

The E-boats and naval ferry barges left for patrols as scheduled.

Between 0945 and 1000, Russian 12.2 cm guns shelled the northern jetty and fishing harbor at Kerch. The command post at Eltigen reported accurate shelling in the morning hours. No damage. At 0845 1 enemy vessel was shelled in the vicinity of Panagija; the vessel withdrew immediately.

The staff of the 613th Naval Gunnery Detachment was moved to Churuback only the operational staff was left at the command post at Eltigen.

Between 2130 and 2200 Radar Station No. 9 at Cape Chroni reported enemy forces on southern and western courses, proceeding at high speed (probably motor torpedo boats).

Nothing to report from patrol between Biriuchi and Arabatskaia headland.

The bombardment of the enemy coast at Konstantinovka was carried out as scheduled. However, the naval landing craft (gums) which had taken in too much water over the bows (sea strength 4), had to return to their base at Genichesk at 0001. Haze and unfavorable moonlight made visibility difficult for the naval ferry barges, so that they had to approach to within 2,000 meters of the coast.

CONFIDENTIAL

21 October 1943

At 0245 the enemy sent several requests for recognition signals and then commenced heavy machine-gun fire. Machine-gun emplacements were silenced by our boats with 2 cm-guns. Konstantinovka and what was presumed to be the river mouth was then shelled from 0255 to 0310. The enemy returned the fire with heavy guns from direction of the river valley; shots fell near the boats. During the withdrawal Troizkoie was shelled between 0320 and 0330 without visible success. After that a heavy gun was seen to be firing. The main line of defense was passed after daybreak. In so doing isolated fire was observed coming from heavy guns in the direction of Stepenovka.

Casualties: 2 wounded, slight damage from machine-gun fire aboard the boats.

U-boat Situation:

U 9 was ordered to return to Theodosia from the operational area off Sochi.

The 1st Air Corps was notified of U 9's return route and that until further notice attacks on submarines in this zone were forbidden, with immediate effect.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 and minesweeping planes carried out routine minesweeping; no mines swept. Theodosia to Sevastopol:

Motor minesweepers (R.) swept route Brown 13 to Brown 1 for moored mines without success.

Sevastopol: FZ-boats with towed loop gear swept the area off the harbor entrance 36 times for ground mines; no mines swept.

A heavy object with a mine parachute attached was found by a fisherman in the Dnepr arm about 8 miles southwest of Khersen. Since mines were observed to have been dropped in that area some weeks ago, the area was closed until further notice.

Supply Traffic:

Crimea convoys and escorts in the western Black Sea ran to schedule; nothing to report.

22 October 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Night reconnaissance detected 1 vessel which could not be clearly identified 20 miles southeast of Tuapse, 1 small armed vessel on southerly course, 15 miles southeast of Gholenjik, and a convoy (no details) off Gholenjik.

No enemy shipping was sighted in the central and western Black Sea during the day.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 October 1943

1 3,500 ton freighter was also sighted off the Turkish coast, about 15 miles east of Sinope, course west. No further observations.

The Caucasus ports from Noverossisk to Batum could not be reconnoitered as the reconnaissance plane is not yet repaired. Aerial photograph of enemy shipping at Anapa revealed the following:

11 motor minesweepers, 40 naval landing boats, 1 small boat, 2 small armed vessels. South of the port: 5 motor minesweepers, 1 motor torpedo boat, 3 naval landing boats, six vessels apparently tugs for the naval landing boats, 1 small coastal vessel under steam, 1 lighter, 6 small boats and 2 motor minesweepers. No enemy shipping in the western Sea of Azov. Comparison with the aerial photographs taken on 1 October shows the following:

1) In the ports on the north coast of the Caucasus (Gheleniik, Noverossisk, Anapa and Taman) about 70 landing craft (motor landing boats, pontoon ferries, crafts) and 35 small naval vessels, (M.T.B.s, motor minesweepers and motor gun boats).

Comparison with the aerial photographs made during the last ten days shows that the number of craft suitable for landing operations remained unchanged, though the vessels were differently distributed. The shipping would provide transport for about 2,500 men. The number of light naval forces in the northern Caucasus ports seemed to be increasing, as vessels were transferred from the south.

2) In the ports on the Sea of Azov on the southeast coast of the Taman peninsula including Yeisk, about 70 landing craft and 24 small naval vessels (M.T.B.s and motor gun boats).

The steady increase in the number of craft suitable for landing operations is due to the fact that they have been transferred by rail to Yeisk. Taking this information as a basis there is transport for about 2,000 men.

Main Naval D/F Station again reported continued activity of small vessels off the east coast of the Black Sea. 4 submarines were detected west and southwest of the Crimea and 1 submarine in the eastern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Noverossisk and Sea of Azov:

Winds east, force 3-4, fair, visibility 15 miles, fog patches during the night at sea and off the coast.

Steamer THEODOR which ran aground off Ochakov, refloated at 1100 after 1,400 tons had been lightered, and continued passage to Odessa. While the THEODOR was being towed off, tug MARTIN WALLNER struck a mine about 200 meters away and sank immediately. The crew was saved except for one who was seriously wounded. A marker buoy was laid to mark the place of the wreck immediately.

The S-boats, S 502, S 503, S 504, and S 505 put in to Nikolaiev at 1500 for dockyard overhaul.

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Commander, 3rd Landing Flotilla was ordered to transfer all naval ferry barges ready for action and already discharged at Nikolaiev, Ochakov, Odessa and Kherson to Sevastopol immediately. This embraces boats of the 1st and 3rd Landing Flotilla as well as the recently arrived boats of the 5th Landing Flotilla. Number of those boats to be transferred and those remaining behind to be reported, as well as estimated times of departure.

With the disbanding of the 5th Landing Craft Flotilla, those of its boats which were handed over to the 7th Landing Craft Flotilla will also be under the command of Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea for operations. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea has assigned the 7th Landing Craft Flotilla to carry out escort and patrol duty on the routes Varna-Odessa and Odessa-Sevastopol.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts Black Sea was notified that the MOTOR-BOAT was to lay the minefield "S 47". She was to be transferred to Constantza immediately and the necessary preparations made as the operation was urgent.

The harbour entrance to Kalta was opened again on 21 October after removal of the section of net which drifted into the minefield gap.

At 0130 the 1st E-boat Flotilla, on patrol south of Cape Opuk sighted a muzzle flash from a craft which was withdrawing to the east at very high speed in the vicinity of the Elshan Cliffs. It was probably an enemy M.T.B. An immediate attempt was made to contact this vessel, but in vain. Otherwise nothing to report.

Air reconnaissance reports revealed that the number of ships in the harbour at Anapa had increased considerably during the last few days, and that shipping had been observed off the coast; 4 boats of the 1st E-boat Flotilla were ordered to put out from Ivan Baba at 1600 to operate against enemy supply ships off the coast between Point Utrish and Utrish-Kosa. At about 2400 the boats should make a surprise attack on vessels lying in the Anapa roads. This they should do by withdrawing about 10 miles from the coast, and steering for Anapa from the west at a crawl. After the attack the boats were to return to Ivan Baba. Boats were warned of our own air area off Anapa.

Since U 9 is homeward bound for Theodosia attacks on submarines are prohibited.

At 1600 4 boats of the 1st E-boat Flotilla put out as ordered.

The naval ferry barges NFP 135, 535, 574, 419, 445 and 447 at Theodosia were tactically subordinated to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus for patrol of the south coast of the Kerch peninsula.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was instructed to send the above naval ferry barges to patrol the coast between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil from nightfall to dawn until further notice. 4 boats were to patrol in groups of two unless there were special indications of an enemy landing on the Crimean coast. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was to determine the exact position, length etc, of the patrol line taking into consideration the demands of the 5th Army Corps.

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Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus has reported the plans for the following night each day by 1500. Further naval ferry barges were brought from Yeiskoye for this purpose.

At 1700 4 naval ferry barges put out from Theodosia for patrol i.e. the first group (2 boats, en route Brown from 36° East, and the second group (2 boats) en route Brown 16 to the eastward.

Distance between the groups 7 miles. The last Flotilla was informed that 4 naval ferry barges were to patrol route Brown between 36° East and Cape Ak-Mul in 2 groups on the night of 22 October returning to Theodosia at dawn.

Nothing to report from patrol in the Kerch Strait on the night of 20/21 October.

At the request of Commanding General, 5th Army Corps, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus asked for an assignment of the naval ferry barges so as to be able to patrol the line from Yanish-Takil as far as Yarsovka, and to carry out extended escort duties. This was necessary as the coastal defenses were inadequate. The following was decided:

There would be no point in stationing a patrol line between Yanish Takyl and Yarsovka as reinforcement of the existing coastal defenses against enemy landing craft for the following reasons:

a) The army and Navy batteries, as well as the Army coastal and anti-aircraft batteries in the Kerch Strait between Cape Takil and Cape Chroni are so strong that one 7.5 cm gun per naval ferry barge would not make any great difference.

b) On the other hand the naval ferry barges would hamper the operation of the coastal guns in the event of approach of enemy forces, since it is very difficult for the coastal guns to distinguish between them. Patrol lines off the coast are therefore in principle situated outside the range of visibility; however, the Kerch Strait is too narrow to allow this.

c) In the northern part of the Kerch Strait as far as Cape Panar the naval ferry barges would have to operate directly off the coast because of the proximity of the enemy batteries on Kossa Chushka; this they would not be able to detect the approach of enemy vessels any sooner than the observation posts on land.

d) 8 naval ferry barges will not suffice to guard 40 km of coastline on dark nights, even on a restricted scale.

Patrol lines in the Kerch Strait are therefore only useful between Yenikale and Pavlovski as well as south of Pavlovski, as far as the minefields there permit to patrol at least 2 km off the coast.

Their main task is not necessarily to prevent the enemy from landing, the heavy coastal guns being in a far better position to do this, but rather to report approaching vessels as early as possible. Harbor defense boats are just as well fit for this as naval ferry barges.

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I therefore intend to transfer further harbor defense boats to Kerch, and to withdraw the naval ferry barges from the Kerch Strait as soon as the minelaying tasks have been carried out.

Nothing to report from the patrol line between Ostrov-Biriuchi and Arabatskaia headland on the night of 22 October.

U-boat Situation:

U 23 and U 24 were advised of the steamers and escort vessels sighted by air reconnaissance in the operational area.

U 9 was informed that E-boats would be operating off the coast between Anapa and Point Utrish on the night of 22/23 October. U 9 was also ordered to put in to Theodosia on the morning of 23 October to refuel. Port Commander, Theodosia would detail a pilot boat wait at point Brown 12 from 0500 to escort U 9.

U 18 reported she would be ready for action again on 27 October.

Minesweeping Activity:

Mine-exploding vessels and minesweeping planes carried out minesweeping assignments on the Danube according to schedule. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea to schedule; Organization and Mobilization Branch, Quartermaster Division, Naval Staff announced that naval forces would have to partake in operations in order to reinforce the defense forces in the southeastern theater (ref. Gkdos 3669/43 of 13 October 1943). Since the Naval High Command refused to withdraw further forces from Norway and France and there are no home reserves available, Group South will meet the need from forces in the Black Sea Command. On the basis of the War Emergency Complement the Naval High Command estimated that 2,761 men were now available from the Sea of Azov and 1,490 men from the Kuban bridgehead.

Organization and Mobilization Branch was working from a false premise. The War Emergency Complement stated the units hitherto engaged in the Kuban bridgehead and on the coast of the Sea of Azov as 4,155 men; the actual strength was, however, 3,500 men.

The withdrawal of the front made it necessary to reinforce and protect the present front line on the Kerch peninsula, in the Genichesk area and on the Crimean coast. There had been a deficiency here of 1,046 men, so in theory there were 2,463 men still available. This calculation did not include the batteries which were withdrawn together with personnel and re-assigned, and whose personnel is therefore not now deductable.

Even with the new organization of the Black Sea Command and inclusion of the still available personnel, there is a deficiency of 687 men. That number will increase to 1140 men if the transfer of men as ordered by Group South was carried out. This number did not consider the crews of 30 fishing vessels, whose transfer was likewise announced by Group South. Any further transfer of men will increase the present deficiencies.

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Sinferopol Enemy Situation:

No enemy shipping was sighted during night reconnaissance. Heavy shipping in the western and central Black Sea during daylight. Several freighters and escort vessels in Turkish territorial waters.

Shipping in port:

Gholenjik: 14 motor minesweepers, 9 M.T.B.s, 23 naval landing boats, 3 tugs, 3 small armed vessels, 16 coastal vessels and lighters, and about 40 small boats.

Novorossisk: 5 naval landing boats, 2 tugs, 1 motor boat, and two small boats.

Anapa: 6 motor minesweepers, 4 M.T.B.s, 2 small armed vessels, 24 motor landing boats, 11 tugs for landing boats and 1 barge, as well as 10 small boats. Off the harbor: 3 motor minesweepers and 2 small coastal vessels, northerly course.

Taman: 3 motor gun boats, 6 motor landing boats, 2 tugs for the landing boats and 8 boats. 1 coastal vessel and 1 sailing vessel off the south coast of Taman.

No enemy shipping was sighted during morning reconnaissance in the Sea of Azov.

Shipping in Port:

Gluchoi Canal (Temriuk): 7 motor gun boats, 1 coastal vessel, 28 pontoon ferries and 17 boats.

Primorsko: 1 motor gun boat, 3 small armed vessels, 2 tugs, 3 coastal vessels and about 35 boats, partly beached.

Yeisk: 4 motor gun boats, 12 small armed vessels, 24 motor landing boats, 60 boats, partly beached.

Genitsa: 9 motor landing boats and 7 tugs for the landing boats. No reconnaissance of Cape Ilin and Kuchuguri because of clouds.

The number of ships in the ports of the Taman peninsula reveals that transfer of light vessels (M.T.B.s, motor minesweepers and motor gun boats) and landing craft was continued.

Main Naval D/F station reported moderate activity of M.T.B.s and motor minesweepers in the northern and central part, some patrol boats in the southern part.

Six submarines were located: 2 in the area south and southwest of the Crimea, 3 in the eastern Black Sea and 1 at sea with unknown position.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Light easterly winds, fair, visibility 10 miles, haze, partly fog patches in the coastal area.

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S 42 and S 45 which have been in Constantza for repair, put out for Ivan Baba at 1600.

Naval Group South ordered that all small craft available in Nikolaiev were to be placed at disposal for ammunition transports on the Dnieper to remove alleged shortage of ammunition in the area of Dniepropetrovsk in the command of Army Group South. Accordingly, Naval Liaison Officer to Army High Command was asked to investigate whether and to what extent the Army desired ammunition transports on the Dnieper.

On the night of 22/23 October four boats of the 1st E-boat Flotilla had been off the Caucasus coast. Between 1940 and 2115 they took up lurking position off Point Utrish. Nothing was sighted except for an M.T.B. proceeding with maximum speed close to the coast at about 1945. About 2300 attack on vessels southwest of the jetty of Anapa in cooperation with the night reconnaissance plane. Each of the boats fired 1 torpedo on the landing places of the boats established by air reconnaissance. 1 heavy, 2 medium and 1 weak detonations as well as subsequently 2 short fires were caused. It is possible that hits were scored on the craft, but were not observed. After the detonations there was heavy anti-aircraft fire against our reconnaissance plane, so that it may be assumed that the enemy suspected bomb attacks. About 2315 our E-boats made another thrust, in the course of which 3 enemy motor gun boats and 1 M.T.B. were observed putting out. In the meantime brightness due to moonlight had increased so much that the boats could be seen far away despite camouflage. So further thrusts appeared unadvisable, the more so as the coast and craft had been alarmed. The boats commenced return passage and put in to Ivan Baba again at 0300.

The 1st E-boat Flotilla was ordered to have four boats attack again in cooperation with the night reconnaissance plane enemy craft lying on the Anapa road on southwest of the jetty off the coast with torpedoes and guns. Do not hesitate to attack! Fire torpedoes only against identified targets. Following that task patrol with maximum speed from Anapa as far as the area off the Cserelka valley immediately offshore. Task: to attack and sink supply vessels, troop landing craft and other craft met there. Attacks against submarines left at discretion.

No objections are raised against patrol with maximum speed off the coast between Anapa and Cserelka, since it is unlikely that the enemy has mounted there already heavy guns and searchlights.

4 E-boats put out from Ivan Baba at 0700 as scheduled.

Nothing to report from patrol off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula. The naval ferry barges put in again to Feodosia in groups of two boats at 0625 and 0800 respectively.

On the night of 23/24 October 4 naval ferry barges ordered to put out from Feodosia at 1630 for patrol.

SECRET FILE

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The extraordinarily high number of ships in the Kerch harbor and on the roads all led the conclusion that landing operations were in preparation. Therefore, a bomb attack against concentrations of craft in Kerch and vicinity was suggested to the 4th Air Force, in order to frustrate the enemy intentions. Because of the strong concentration of light craft in this narrow harbor, considerable success was expected even from a ray effect.

4th Air Force replied that the present situation on land did not allow to spare forces for other purposes. Since experience had shown that the Russians usually did not concentrate their boats, a bomb attack did not appear useful.

Further report from patrol in the Kerch Strait on the night of 22/23 October.

3 naval ferry barges and 4 harbor defense boats were to take up the patrol line on the night of 23/24 October.

Further report from patrol between Ostriv-Biriuchi and Arabatskaia Beerland on the night of 22/23 October. I agree with the suggestion of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine to repeat the bombardment of the enemy front and concentrations on the north coast of the Sea of Azov provided that the Army does not raise any objections. Since the bombardment of the enemy front in the vicinity of Stepanovka caused the enemy to shell our main defense line heavily, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to contact the Army, but not to ensure repetition of the bombardment.

On the night of 23/24 October 3 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 combined operations craft shall patrol the line off the north coast of the Sea of Azov.

Naval High Command, Naval Staff, Operations Division asked for report on fundamental considerations and intentions regarding operations of the naval forces for the protection of the Crimean coast from enemy attempts at landing.

It was reported to Group South:

1) In the Sea of Azov 5 naval landing craft (guns), 4 naval ferry barges and harbor defense boats stationed in Genichesk on patrols, presently daily from nightfall until dawn between Ostriv-Biriuchi and Chokrak and along the Biriuchi beerland. In addition, reconnaissance patrols are employed depending on the enemy situation.

2) The remaining 4 naval ferry barges and harbor defense boats left behind in the Kerch Strait will be on patrol during the night.

3) Patrol in the Black Sea: 4 naval ferry barges of the 3rd Landing Flotilla to which The Crimea has been assigned as a berth for that purpose. Presently 4 - 6 naval ferry barges patrol daily the line between Cape Chauda and Kysyl-Kul from nightfall until dawn. Intensification of patrols is prepared, as soon as the naval ferry barges on transfer to Eupatoria have arrived.

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Furthermore, patrol of the south coast of the Crimea west of Theodosia by naval ferry barges of the 3rd Landing Flotilla is planned. Bases for these craft will be Theodosia and Yalta.

Further patrol by the 1st U-boat Flotilla and Crimean group of the 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla in the patrol lines and reconnaissance lines offshore depending on the enemy situation on the grounds of air-reconnaissance, agents reports and statements of prisoners.

The Command of the Royal Rumanian Navy received a report from the Supreme General Staff, stating that according to statements of captured Russian officers seven transport ships and some British and American submarines which were to reinforce the Russian Black Sea fleet, had passed the Dardanelles with permission of Turkey. It was said that the craft had already arrived in Russian ports. On the grounds of that report the 4th Air Force was again asked to establish in time by continuous air reconnaissance of the Caucasus coast and ports any enemy concentrations and increase of shipping. Only then would it be possible to recognize the intentions of the enemy and to take The necessary countermeasures.

U-boat Situation:

U 23 reported sinking of a 1,000-ton coastal vessel off Anaklia (15 miles north-northwest of Poti) at 0041. At 0118 U 24 attacked a 1,500 ton tanker, escorted by 3 motor minesweepers and 2 submarines, in Air Force grid square 0484; the attack frustrated as the enemy was warned in time. At 0500 U 9 returning from her 7th enemy operation put in to Theodosia again to refuel.

Extract from the short report covering the period from 3 to 23 October: At 0505 on 6 October 2 destroyers that had been reported by remote reconnaissance planes came into sight; they bombarded the coast at Cape Hedanon. The boat submerged immediately to attack; however, attack was given up as the unit withdrew to the seaward with high speed.

At 0537 Flotilla, Commander, Charkov withdrawing to the seaward at a distance of 5,000 m came into sight. At 1625 the destroyer exploded at a distance of 15 miles. (Therewith stkas had destroyed the third enemy destroyer). On the evening of 6 October U 9 was at the place where the CHARKOV had sunk; no survivors were found.

On 9 and 10 October flank protection for the large convoy of combined operations craft ("Viking" operation). Subsequently the boat had been in the operational area off Tapir close to the coast until 22 October, no shipping was observed in the Shache mouth and in the southern entrance of Tuapse.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping on the Danube as scheduled. Buoys were laid on route Green from Point 29 as far as Beresanski Canal. On the same route minesweeping planes swept for mines 12 times without success.

Systematic minesweeping in the area off Ochakov where steamer THEODERICH had run aground was ordered; likewise minesweeping in the area where tug MARTIN WALLNER had struck a mine and sunk.

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Supply Traffic:

Convoy traffic off the Crimean coast and in the western Black Sea as scheduled without incidents.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance did not sight any enemy shipping in the Black Sea during daylight. 1 coastal vessel within Turkish territorial waters off Sinope, 1 sailing vessel off Samsun. As compared with previous days, shipping in ports of Anapa and Taman was unchanged. No enemy shipping in the Sea of Azov.

Air reconnaissance at noon revealed the following shipping in the ports: 11 naval landing boats, 6 tugs for naval landing boats and 3 boats. Taman: 4 motor gun boats, 4 M.T.B.s, 2 tugs for naval landing boats and about 20 small boats. Anapa: 7 motor minesweepers, 6 M.T.B.s, 2 small armed craft, 15 tugs for naval landing boats, 25 naval landing boats and 4 small coastal vessels, also 12 boats.

Main Naval D/F Station Eupatoria reported moderate activity of escort vessels and patrol boats in the southern part of the East Coast and single M.T.B.s and motor minesweepers at sea in the central part.

6 submarines were detected; 2 in the area south and southwest off the Crimea, 2 in the central and 2 in the eastern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: light northeasterly winds, visibility 15 miles, fog patches over land and in the coastal sector.

Upon an request of the Army for troop transports on the Dnieprby means of naval ferry barges, it was ordered that FP 538, FP 132 and MFP 394 lying in Kherson should be used for transports of wounded between Kherson and Nikolaiev or Odessa. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was charged with the command. Naval Liaison Officer to Army Group A was asked to order Quartermaster General, Army Group to convert the naval ferry barges for the transport of wounded.

Effective 1200 on 25 October the route Odessa-Ochakov-Kherson was opened again for shipping. Commander, Convoys and Escorts was informed that the commander of the ROMANIA had reported the ship ready for transfer to Constantza. The ship should be transferred immediately and should be engaged in laying barrage S 47. At 0500 15 naval ferry barges put out from Nikolaiev for Sevastopol.

At 2235, Port Commander, Ak Mechet reported that several flare parachutes had been observed in the Karkinitski Bay to the northward from 2000 to 2200. At 2200 several reports on anti-aircraft fire and gunfire in the same direction.

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At 1342 6 enemy planes attacked Yalta with 24 bombs. Another ship HELGA was damaged. Further bombs fell on the jetty. 2 men of the Navy and 3 men of the civilian crew were killed, 1 man heavily wounded, 2 men slightly wounded. 1 plane was probably shot down.

On the night of 23/24 October 4 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla carried out the operation against Anapa as scheduled. The night reconnaissance plane could not take off on account of ground fog. At 2055 during approach to Anapa engagement with 2 gunboats and 2 escort vessels close to the coast. S 28 fired a torpedo at a gunboat; the torpedo missed its target. After fire had been opened, our E-boats were made out by the searchlights on the coast and were fired on by the gunboats and by 7.6 cm guns from ashore. After the enemy gunboats had come out of sight during their withdrawal from the coast, the boats took up lurking position in the reconnaissance line close to the coast as far as Osereika valley. No enemy shipping was observed.

4 boats put in to Ivan Baba again at 0240.

Contrary to the first impression, the E-boat attack on the Anapa roads on the night of 23 October must have been anticipated by the enemy. As a countermeasure, the Russian had laid out a patrol line, so that surprise attack was impossible, and furthermore, the enemy was able to repulse the E-boats with his searchlights and coastal guns.

No E-boat operations were proposed for the night of 24/25 October, as the E-boats had been out on operation for four nights. However, immediate readiness for action from 1600 to 0500 was ordered to 3 E-boats.

At 0410 S 42 and S 45 put in to Ivan Baba from Constantza.

Nothing to report from patrol off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula on the night of 23/24 October.

During the following night 5 naval ferry barges should put out from Theodosia at 1600 for patrol line in the Kerch Straits.

Nothing to report from patrol in the Kerch Straits on the night of 23/24 October.

On the night of 24/25 October 3 naval ferry barges and 4 harbor defense boats should put to sea from Kerch at 1630, for patrol in the Kerch Straits. The 5th battery of Naval Gunnery Detachment No. 613 reported one gun temporarily non-operational due to hits by enemy guns during the day, gunfire and low-level attacks of bombers against the coast west of Eltigen. No casualties.

Nothing to report from patrol between Ostrov-Biriuchi and Arabatskaia headland.

At 1600 3 naval ferry barges put out from Genichesk for patrol between Biriuchi and Kirilovka; 2 harbor defense boats on patrol between Buchta and Chkrak and 2 combined operations minesweepers on patrol between Buchta and Orka. Furthermore, another 3 naval ferry barges should patrol additionally between Buchta and Arabatskaia headland south of Chkrak. The naval landing craft (guns) should put out from Genichesk at 1620.

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U-Boat Situation:

In the course of a discussion with Commander, U 9 the latter was ordered to put out at 1600 to continue the operation against the enemy. Since in view of the large number of ships in Anapa current traffic was to be expected between Gheleniik - Novorossisk - Anapa, U 9 was assigned the operational area "Iltis". In order to give the commander greater freedom of action he was assigned operational area "Tapir" as alternate operational area, to where he could transfer at will in case he should be recognized by the enemy in the area "Iltis" or he should find out after some days that worthwhile objectives were not to be expected there.

U 9 was ordered to break off the second part of the operation so early that the boat will enter Constantza on 3 November 1943.

U 9 reported departure for area "Iltis" at 1600.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 and minesweeping planes swept for mines as scheduled; no mines swept. Kherson: Minesweeping planes reportedly swept the Kherson Canal for mines 18 times.

Route Kherson Schakov was opened again for shipping.

Supply Traffic:

Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea as scheduled. Nothing to report.

25 October 1943

Significant Enemy Situation:

Daylight reconnaissance reported no enemy ships in the whole Black Sea and Sea of Azov. No reconnaissance during the night because of the weather. 1 3,500 ton passenger ship was sighted off the Turkish coast, on westerly course. Shipping in ports of the East Coast was as follows:

Anapa: 8 motor minesweepers, 2 M.L.B.s, 14 tugs and 25 motor landing boats.

Gheleniik: 8 motor minesweepers, 1 outward bound, 11 M.L.B.s, 27 motor landing boats, 7 tugs, 10 coastal vessels and some lighters, totaling 3,000 tons, 11 other boats, 1 outward bound.

Novorossisk: 2 tugs, 3 motor landing boats, 1 motor boat, 1 small coastal vessel, 7 boats.

Sochi: 4 motor launches, 8 M.L.B.s, 27 motor landing boats, 8 tugs, 3 small escort vessels as well as 9 boats.

Tuapse: 1 destroyer, 5 minesweepers, 8 motor minesweepers, 12 M.L.B.s 4 fishers, 26 motor landing boats tied together in 4 rows, 1 escort vessel, 1 steaming 7,000 ton tanker, 4 freighters, 5 coastal vessels and about 25 boats.

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Sochi: 4 large motor minesweepers and 1 coastal vessel.

Sukhum: 3 coastal vessels and 7 boats.

Gudauty: 3 coastal vessels.

Moderate activity of motor minesweepers off the north coast of the Caucasus.

Shipping in Ports of the Sea of Azov:

Yeisk: 11 motor gun boats, 1 M.T.B., about 3 motor landing boats, 4 tugs, and 30 small boats.

Primorsko: 4 motor gun boats, 6 motor landing boats, 2 tugs, 55 boats.

Gluchoi Canal: 14 motor gun boats, 4 M.T.B.s, 25 ferries.

Baki: 25 boats, partly ashore.

Kamyshevatka: 14 boats, also partly ashore.

Kuchugury: 2 boats.

The further increase in number of ships, very particularly of troop landing craft in the harbors of Anapa and Gheleniik was striking. In connection with the continuous bombardement of Kerch and of the coast north and south of Kerch and the continuous reinforcement of the enemy artillery on the eastern shore of the Kerch Strait, this increase of shipping was clear proof that the enemy intended to land across the Kerch Strait.

Main Naval D/F Station reported moderate activity of M.T.P.s and motor minesweepers in the northern part of the East Coast, while in the southern part there was only normal activity of single small craft. 2 submarines were detected in the operational area in the northwestern Black Sea, 3 submarines off the west and southwest coast of the Crimea and 1 in the eastern Black Sea with unknown position.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: winds northeast to east, force 2 - 3, fair, fog patches over land and in the coastal area.

Enemy submarines attacked a fairly large towed convoy proceeding from Sevastopol to Ak Mechet about 4 miles west of Ak Mechet.

2 torpedoes were fired. One hit was scored on lighter FYA. 5, her foreship was torn off. The lighter was towed in to Ak Mechet and put ashore. Except for one man the crew was saved. The second torpedo ran ashore.

At 1515, Ship 19 and 3 submarine chasers put out from Ak Mechet for anti-submarine patrol at the place of attack west of Ak Mechet.

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The place of combat was further patrolled by submarine chasers. Freight towing vessel [illegible] likewise proceeding within the convoy was damaged by aerial torpedoes, and should be transferred from Sevastopol to Odessa by tugs; however, it had to be towed in to Ak Mechet and put aground there because of inrush of water. Possibilities of caulking should be examined in Ak Mechet.

At 1145 3 bombers attacked Yalta. Another hit was scored on freighter [illegible]. The fire was extinguished immediately. 1 plane was observed to have been hit by anti-aircraft guns.

Commander, 3rd Landing Craft Flotilla was ordered to transfer 5 naval ferry barges of the 3rd Landing Flotilla from Sevastopol to Theodosia under the command of the Flotilla commander.

The naval ferry barges took in 150 [illegible] mines in Sevastopol for transport to Theodosia. They were ordered to put to sea at 1300 on 26 October.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to engage these 5 naval ferry barges in patrol service of the south coast of the Kerch peninsula after arrival in Theodosia and discharge of mines.

Nothing to report from patrol off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula on the night of 25 October.

4 naval ferry barges should carry out patrol on the night of 25/26 October; they were ordered to put out in groups of two boats each at 1545 and 1635 respectively.

At 1700, S 45 left Theodosia for Constantza for exchange of the screws.

A large number of ships in the harbors of Anapa, especially numerous troop landing boats, tugs, coastal vessels, also M.T.B.s and motor minesweepers indicated imminent Russian attempts at landing on the Kerch peninsula; therefore Commander, 1st E-boat Flotilla received the following orders:

On the night of 25/26 October two groups of the 1st E-boat Flotilla each consisting of 3 boats are to attack ship concentrations on the Anapa roads in close cooperation with the night reconnaissance plane. The boats are to put out from Ivan Baba at 1700. While the first group will attack the coast south of the jetty, so as to bind the enemy patrol boats, the second group will attack immediately afterwards craft in the harbor and north of the jetty with torpedoes.

Following that task the first group will carry out reconnaissance patrol on a line stretching from Anapa as far as the area off the Osereika valley immediately offshore, and attack any enemy craft met in that area. Subsequently the boats will put in again to Ivan Baba. The second group will put in immediately after fulfilment of its task.

Further details were given to the Flotilla Commander and the group leaders personally.

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At 1700, the 1st E-boat Flotilla reported that 5 boats had put to sea in accordance with the above orders. (As 1 boat of the first group was not ready to sail, reconnaissance patrol after the attack was therefore renounced).

The Commander of the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was ordered by Gkdos Chefs. 264 to lay barrage S 73 in Theodosia Bay (see enclosure).

No engagement with the enemy during patrol on the night of 24/25 October 3 naval ferry barges and 4 harbor defense boats should take up the patrol line on the night of 25/26 October from 1130 to 1155 enemy 15 cm guns shelled the northern and southern jetties of Kerch.

No damage to naval installations.

On the night of 24/25 October craft on extended patrol off Biriuchi peninsula and Arabatskaia headland did not contact the enemy and put in again to Genichesk after the task had been carried out.

By 1630 for hydrographic survey in the area of Utiutsku-Liman two combined operations boats that had put to sea from Liman at 0745 completed their task. Survey revealed that landing west and northwest of Girsleie (Kirilovka) is possible for naval ferry barges about 1 - 2 miles offshore.

On the night of 25/26 October patrol as on the previous day would be carried out by 2 naval ferry barges, 3 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 combined operations minesweepers.

At 0820 10 bombers attacked Arabatskaia headland in the vicinity of the airfield. The planes machine-gunned the 1st and 4th battery. No damage.

At 2140, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported that in the course of the next 24 hours Biriuchi and the peninsula between Ultiukski Liman and Molochnoie would be completely evacuated. Two naval ferry barges to be withdrawn from patrol service should transport off the troops from that area.

On account of the front situation and the withdrawal of the main defense line, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to hand over to the Army all naval land units stationed at Genichesk for employment on land. The naval landing craft (guns) and naval ferry barges were to combine further coastal patrol, and, if the Army desired, bombardment of enemy positions on Biriuchi peninsula and east of it.

Furthermore, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to prepare immediately the necessary trucks required for a possible transfer of the naval land units from Genichesk. Commander of the 3rd Landing Craft Flotilla (guns) and Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine were ordered by Gkdos-Chefs. 266 to take any necessary measures so that the 3rd Landing Craft Flotilla (guns) was ready should evacuation of Genichesk become necessary.

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U-boat Situation:

The Italian U-boats CB 3 and CB 6 reported ready for action were ordered to carry out anti-submarine patrol in the area south off Sartch Point. The boats were to put out from Sevastopol at 0500 on 26 October, and to leave the operational area on 28 October in due time, so as to arrive at Point Brown 5 at 0800 for joint return passage to Sevastopol.

Task: Attack against enemy submarines and surface forces at will in the assigned operational areas. Attack against surface forces outside the assigned areas was prohibited, as our own convoy traffic was passing that area.

Minesweeping Activity:

No activity of minesweeping planes on the Danube on account of engine trouble.

Sevastopol: The Harbor Defense Flotilla cut and blasted an inertia contact mine off Kruglaia Bay.

Supply Traffic:

Convoys off the Crimean Coast and in the western Black Sea were carried out according to plan. Except for the torpedoing of lighter TTA 5 and of freight towing vessel [illegible] from the towed convoy proceeding from Sevastopol to Odessa via Ak Mechet, nothing special to report.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Daylight and night reconnaissance did not sight any enemy or neutral shipping in the entire Black Sea and Sea of Azov. No reconnaissance or ports of the Caucasus and Sea of Azov.

Main Naval D/F Station reported during the day mainly slight activity of R.T.B.s in the northern part. In the evening hours bearings were taken of a minesweeper in the area of Tuapse. In the course of the day 6 submarines were detected in radio traffic: 2 in the northwestern Black Sea, 2 in the area west and southwest of the Crimea and 2 with unknown position.

Weather forecast for Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: winds about East, force 3, cloudy, visibility 15 miles, morning haze.

In connection with the imminent evacuation of the Crimea (see further below) the Commander of the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was ordered not to carry out minelaying assignment S 73 for the time being. The naval ferry barges were to remain in Sevastopol laden.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was informed that laying of barrage S 47 was postponed until further notice, and the motor minesweepers including the Crimea group were placed at his disposal for escort duties.

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According to a report received from Port Commander Nikolaiev, mines were observed to have been dropped in the southern dockyard. Thereupon the fairway and the harbor of Nikolaiev were closed.

With consent of Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea the Ochakov - Nikolaiev route was opened again for shipping. Ship 19 as well as 3 submarine chasers that had put to sea for the place of the torpedoing of the TYPH 5 searched the area 5 miles west of Cape Lechet without success, and put in again to Cape Lechet at 1045.

Naval Shore Commander, Crimea was ordered to deliver 4 guns of Battery Sevastopol west for tasks in the Adriatic. The Naval Fortress Engineer Battalion and the Ordnance Arsenal were to speed up transfer by sea of the guns to Constantza. Loading in accordance with the orders of Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast and Transhipment Staff A.

Air raid warning in Yalta from 0844 to 0900 and from 1149 to 1155. No enemy action.

The stern of freighter DIANA which was heavily damaged by the third bomb hit was under water. Scuddling by pumps was in vain. The craft was towed to the roads, so as not to block the harbor of Yalta. There it capsized and sank in 10 meters of water. About 1 meter of the wrecked freighter jutted out from the water. At 1925 a light signal was observed in the Yalta mountains; an anti-aircraft battery in Yalta immediately fired at these signals. When the signal was no more observed. According to statement of Roumanian Mountain Division, light signals had been observed in the entire coastal sector along the coast, so that enemy operations were to be expected.

On the night of 26/27 October 2 groups of the 1st S-Boat Flotilla operated in the area off the North coast of the Caucasus off Anapa as scheduled. Soon after 2200 the first group sighted an enemy escort vessel (motor gun boat), they attacked immediately and withdrew slowly to the south, so as to divert the attention of the escort vessel from the second group. The enemy escort vessel returned the fire and then withdrew to the coast. No further escort vessels were observed west and south of Anapa. Return at 0030. At about 0100 on reverse course 2 Russian M.A.B.s with high speed, range about 2,000 meters. Fire was not opened because of the high speed of the craft which came soon out of sight. While the first group was engaged with the enemy patrol-boat, the second group was off Anapa and requested four aircraft parachute flares from the night reconnaissance plane; however, the flares appeared too far north east of the harbor, so that nothing could be found out. Despite the fire duel, the enemy patrol vessel remained offshore changing its position several times. It was observed that compared with previous days the activity of searchlights and anti-aircraft guns had considerably decreased; thus it was concluded that the Russians had recognized cooperation between our S-boats and the night reconnaissance plane, and that they attached new particular importance to the activity of their patrol boats. Soon after 2300, six torpedoes were fired to the harbor northwest of the jetty, 1 ran a round. The expected detonations did not take place. Probable reason: The torpedoes ran on the very flat coast or into the net barrage recently laid in front of the harbor.

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Subsequently both groups carried out reconnaissance patrol and put in again to Ivan Baba at 0300.

At first no operations were planned for the night of 27 October 3 boats in immediate readiness from 2100 to 0200.

Nothing to report from patrol off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil on the night of 25/26 October on the night of 26/27 October patrol as on the previous nights.

From 1230 to 1250 air attacks on Theodosia.

First wave: 6 IL 2, low-level attack, altitude 400 meters, bombs and machine-gun fire on the harbor. 1 IL 2 was shot down and crashed in the harbor basin.

Second wave: 5 IL 2 and 6 LaGG 3, low-level attack, altitude 300 meters, bombs and machine gun fire, 2 planes were shot down. No damage to naval installations ashore. During withdrawal the planes attacked a convoy enroute from Cape Chauda to Theodosia 3 miles west of Cape Ili with bombs and machine gun fire. Two men aboard a harbor defense boat were slightly wounded, no further damage.

Nothing to report from patrol on the night of 25/26 October on the night of 26/27 October 3 naval ferry barges and 4 harbor defense boats should carry out patrol as on the previous days. During the day again enemy gunfire. No noteworthy damage or casualties. Our own batteries recorded successfully enemy landing craft off the Taman coast.

Nothing to report from patrol between Biriuchi peninsula and Chokrak.

The naval ferry barges evacuating troops from Biriuchi peninsula entered Genichesk at 0500 laden and put out again to Biriuchi immediately after discharge. At 1700 3 naval ferry barges and at 1815 another 2 naval ferry barges put out from Genichesk to fetch the last troops from Biriuchi headland.

On the night of 26/27 October 3 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 combined operations boats should carry out patrol between Biriuchi and Chokrak.

Since the Army had ordered as a precautionary measure without obligation short-termed evacuation of the Crimea, Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea, and the Sea Transport Offices in the western Black Sea were ordered to stop immediately all transports to the Crimea, and to transfer with utmost speed all steamers, freight towing vessels and auxiliary sailing vessels ready to sail in convoys without cargo to Sevastopol for a special operation. The ships were to arrive in Sevastopol on the morning of 29 October at the latest. Ships lying in the berths laden or half-laden were to be discharged immediately, as far as discharge was possible until departure of the convoys to Sevastopol. Ships requiring ballast were to be laden immediately.

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Commander, Convoys and Escorts Black Sea, was ordered to send all available escort forces and naval ferry barges into action immediately for convoy escort. Inadequate protection of the convoys had to be taken into the bargain. On the evening the army reported that the short-termed evacuation ordered in the forenoon, was canceled at first. Thereupon the above order was recalled immediately.

U-boat Situation:

CB 3 and CB 6 put out from Sevastopol at 0525. The Italian Naval Commando Sevastopol was ordered to have the 2 CB boats return from the operational area to Sevastopol on the morning of 27 October. The boats should arrive in the harbor before nightfall. The commander of the 30th U-boat Flotilla was ordered not to send U 18 to Sevastopol, but to carry out the planned operation from Constantza. U 18 received an operational order for 27 October 1230; she should attack immediately, if any particularly valuable targets should be met during approach to the operational area. Attention of the U-boats in the operational areas was called to the result of the air reconnaissance of Tuapse(7,000-ton tanker steaming as well as 3 1,200-ton freighters) and Gholenjik.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeper planes swept for mines on the Danube without success. Several check sweeps over the Kherson Canal as well as over the Bug without success.

As mines were observed to have been dropped on the night of 25/26 October the Bug was closed for shipping temporarily from the bridge of the Bug as far as Voloshki; however, it was opened again in the meantime with agreement of Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea. Further operations of minesweeping planes were planned. Motor minesweepers laid a line of channel buoys in front of the harbor entrance of Sevastopol. The area was swept with apposa gear on both sides of the buoy line; no mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

Convoys off the Crimean coast and in the western Black Sea as scheduled. Nothing to report.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance did not sight any enemy shipping in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. Again weather did not permit reconnaissance of the Caucasus and Black Sea ports.

The 1st Air Corps reported that at 0135 probably 3 what was presumed to be motor minesweepers had been sighted 15 miles northwest of Anapa.

Main Naval D/F Station Eupatoria reported at 1035: The Fleet Command currently entertains moderate radio communication with all fairly large vessels. Putting to sea of these vessels is not yet positive.

It is not out of the question that radio communication was aimed at preparatory deception.

For the rest, radio traffic revealed activity of M.T.B.s and motor minesweepers in the northern part of the East Coast. In the forenoon 3 submarines were detected in the area south of the Crimea.

At about 0030 Radar Station No. 9 located several objectives on southerly courses at sea off the northwestern entrance of the Kerch Strait.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Novorossisk: winds northeast to east, force 2-3, in the afternoon from northeast, freshening up to force 4 or 5, partly light showers. Visibility 6 - 10 miles. In the afternoon in the area south of the Crimea as far as Lupse south to southeast, rapidly increasing swell.

Commander, Escorts and Convoys, Black Sea was ordered to continue preparations for minefield S 47. For that purpose the Crimea group of the 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was placed at his disposal. Decision as to whether minefield S 47 was to be laid by the MMS or by 2 naval ferry barges (mines) would be taken probably on the morning of 28 October.

The Commander of the 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was ordered to direct personally the transfer of the motor minesweeper group (M.) consisting of the F 305, F 306 and F 312 from Sevastopol to Theodosia on 27 October. Preparations for minelaying should be made so early that minelaying could begin in the afternoon of 28 October 2 naval ferry barges were handed over to Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla for the forenoon of 29 October for partial evacuation of the E-boat base of Ivan Baba; the barges were to be loaded immediately with valuable material not urgently needed in Ivan Baba. Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered that this must by no means affect further E-boat operations from Ivan Baba. At first 24 torpedoes should be left in Ivan Baba, the remaining torpedoes should be loaded on the naval ferry barges. (Order was amended; only Italian torpedoes were transported off). The naval ferry barges should be loaded at nightfall on 29 October and then be ready to put out to Sevastopol.

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Inquiry was made to the 1st E-boat Flotilla as to whether from the viewpoint of navigation (approach of Ivan Baba during fog and dark nights) there were any objections against a shallow minefield to protect the Barracken Bay of Ivan Baba from enemy landings.

The 1st E-boat Flotilla was to carry out the minelaying operation off Tuapse on the night of 27/28 October as scheduled, as far as weather was favorable. (Possible postponement of the minelaying operation on account of the weather had to be expected).

At 1310 3 naval ferry barges and the M. group of motor minesweeper consisting of 4 boats, put out from Sevastopol for Theodosia. Naval Shore Command, Caucasus reported that naval ferry barge F 135 ran aground in front of the harbor of Theodosia on the night of 27/28 October and that lighter 108 filled with water. Recovery of the naval ferry barge was intended at dawn.

Nothing to report from patrol off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula on the night of 26/27 October. On the following night, patrol same as in the previous days. However, increasing deterioration of the weather forced the boats to put in again to Theodosia at 2230. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus further reported that 2 planes were shot down in the course of the second attack on Theodosia carried out by 17 enemy planes on 26 October. No damage was caused in the harbor.

Upon inquiry, Naval High Command, Operations Division, Naval Staff had been informed of the basic plans regarding operations of Naval forces to protect the Crimean Coast from enemy attempts at landing (see War Diary of 23 October); since Group South objected that E-boats are little fit for patrol service, it was additionally reported:

Employment of E-boats for patrol and reconnaissance assignments to defend enemy attempts at landing is intended only when there is definite evidence of an imminent attack; then the boats are to operate from the patrol lines and reconnaissance lines to attack the enemy forces, if possible, in cooperation with the night reconnaissance plane.

Furthermore it is intended to fight enemy forces which could not be stopped before landing, both with naval ferry barges on patrol off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula or lying in Theodosia and with boats of the 1st E-boat Flotilla, lying in immediate readiness from nightfall until dawn (as far as they are not at sea). Should the E-boats be out on operation, the operation is to be broken off immediately, and the E-boats are to attack the landing flotilla.

Furthermore it is planned to add to the minefields S 71 and S 72 another minefield S 73 proposed to be laid on 28 October to protect the south coast of the Crimea from enemy landings.

Subsequently laying of UMA minefields is intended in the Koktebel and Barracken bay west and east of Ivan Baba which areas are particularly liable to enemy landings; however, first the 1st E-boat Flotilla was to examine whether these minefields could render approach to Ivan Baba during fog and dark nights difficult.

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Nothing to report from patrol in the Kerch Strait on the night of 26/27 October. On the following night patrol same as on the previous days.

3 naval ferry barges (guns) and 2 combined operations boats patrolling between Biriuchi peninsula and Arabatskaia headland on the night of 26/27 October re-entered Genichesk at 0530; nothing to report.

Naval ferry barges carried out evacuation of the Biriuchi peninsula as scheduled.

On the night of 27/28 2 landing craft (guns), 2 naval ferry barges and 2 combined operations boats will carry out patrol.

U-boat Situation:

The two Italian CB boats engaged in submarine chase in the area south of Sortch Point, put in to Sevastopol at 1325 on 27 October without having sighted the enemy.

At 1300 U 18 put out from Constantza for the operational area off Batum to operate against the enemy. The boat was equipped with 5 torpedoes.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping assignments off Sevastopol were carried out as scheduled without result.

Several check sweeps of minesweeping planes over the Bay without success. No activity of minesweeping planes in the Danube area because of unfavorable weather.

Supply Traffic:

Supply traffic without incidents. In the afternoon already deterioration of the weather affected unfavorably further convoy planning.

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Situation:

Daylight and night reconnaissance did not sight any enemy or neutral shipping in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. Weather did not permit reconnaissance of the Caucasus and Black Sea ports.

At 1820 the Cape Chersonesus station located an objective at sea about 30 miles northwest of Cape Chersonesus on southwest course.

Main Naval D/F Station Eupatoria reported in the morning no activity of large or small vessels except for a submarine returning from the northwestern Black Sea. Radio silence in the area of the fleet.

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At noon a destroyer and a minesweeper were detected in the southern part of the East Coast of the Caucasus; on the evening they proceeded in northeastern direction and were informed of the position of an unidentified vessel sailing 30 miles south of Gechi at about midnight. In addition, some U.T.B.s were sighted in the south part of the Caucasus.

3 submarines were detected in the area off the west coast of the Crimea, 1 submarine with unknown position in the central Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Noverossisk: winds northeast, force 6, sudden squalls up to force 8, cloudy, local showers, visibility 20 miles.

According to report from the Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine the Army is supposed to evacuate Genichesk on 29 October (in command: the 6th Army High Command, not the 17th Army High Command stationed on the Crimea). The land units of the Navy will have to leave the port by 1700 on 28 October. Now there exists the situation I had feared would arise, when decreeing as a precaution, the order for subsequent employment in the Sea of Azov of the landing craft (guns) and naval ferry barges lying in Genichesk, should Genichesk have to be abandoned (see Appendix XXII Gkdos Chefs. 266/43 enclosed to War Diary of 25 October).

However, in view of the present weather which according to report from the meteorological station, will not change even on 29 October, putting to sea of the landing craft (guns) is out of the question. The boats are severely damaged, so that during previous operations they partly took in water even with a sea of force 2 - 3. I therefore order destruction of the landing craft (guns) after removal of the 8.8 and 2 cm guns should Genichesk be abandoned.

In view of the strong northeast wind a longer sojourn of the naval ferry barges in the Sea of Azov for coastal protection, as provided in the orders of 25 October is impossible. However, I shall try to have them proceed through the Kerch Strait; losses during passage will have to be taken into the bargain, though.

In the morning the naval ferry barges received the following orders:

1. F 303, 492, 493 and 577 to transfer from Genichesk to Kerch on 29 October.
2. It is ordered additionally:
   a) the unit is to put to sea at 0300 on 29 October and to time passage so that Kasantip will be passed at about 1600, Cape Chroni at about 2100.
   b) Passage along Arabatskaia headland close to the coast. Pass north of our own lanner areas in the Arabatskaia Bay and Kasantip Bay. Proceed under cover of the coast from Cape Chroni to Yenikale as far as sea depth permits. Between Cape Chroni and Yenikale from 45° 23.2' North, 36° 39.6' East via 45° 21.9' North, 36° 38.7' East to 45° 20.7' North, 36° 37.2' East; do not pass over that line in eastern direction.

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c) Any enemy forces that might appear are to be attacked with all means while passage is continued.
d) The crews of the naval ferry barges are to be reinforced by part of the crews of the landing craft (guns) left behind in Sonichesk, so as to reinforce the defensive forces particularly against attempts at boarding; and to equip them adequately with arms.
e) Radio service: K.C.
f) In command: Acting Flotilla Commander, 3rd Landing Craft Flotilla (guns).

3. Naval Shore Commander is to insure uninterrupted information of the coast. Do not call for recognition signal. It is to be insured that our searchlights are not trained on the naval ferry barges.

After measures had been decreed in the Crimea the previous days to be prepared for the event of short-termed evacuation, Commander in Chief, 17th Army High Command released keyword "Michael 2" at about 1330 to the effect that short-termed evacuation of personnel from the Crimea is to be started in the evening of 29 October.

Following corresponding instruction of all subordinated offices, it is ordered in details:

1.) Order to the 1st E-boat Flotilla that Ivan Baba will have to be evacuated in the evening of 30 October that all workshop installations as well as material and buildings, also the wooden piers are to be thoroughly destroyed before withdrawal.

On the morning of 29 October 2 naval ferry barges will be placed at disposal to transport away the reserve torpedoes as well as the most valuable material. Loading is to be well timed so that withdrawal first to Sevastopol can take place on the evening of 29 October. Evacuation of the crews by trucks, if possible. No more than 40 men are to be embarked in each boat. The E-boats may take aboard 5 more men than planned.

Orders for departure of E-boats will follow. When putting to sea the E-boats are to mine the harbor entrance of Ivan Baba with F C mines available there. Depth setting minus 1 meter.

2.) Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla is ordered: Minelaying assignment "S 73" canceled. 1 naval ferry barge to remain in Balaklava at the disposal of the Port Commander, to evacuate to Sevastopol his personnel with baggage and the most valuable material. Time of departure will be ordered by Naval Shore Commander, Crimea. However, naval ferry barges and minesweepers (M.) will have to arrive in Sevastopol on the morning of 31 October at the latest.

2 naval ferry barges are to be put to sea for Yalta on 29 October. There they are to be placed under the command of Naval Shore Commander, Crimea, for evacuating transports. Arrival in Sevastopol on 31 October must likewise be insured.

Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and 2 minesweepers (M.) are to transfer to Sevastopol on 29 October.

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3). Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus is ordered:

a) On the night of 28/29 October the patrol line in the Kerch Strait comprising 4 naval ferry barges is to be sent out to Theodosia so early that boats will pass Cape Takil at dawn.
b) The last naval ferry barge leaving Kerch is to mine the port and entrance with 24 MB, U.S setting 6 hours, period delay system 1.
c) Harbor defense boats lying in Kerch and most of them not ready to sail are to be sunk before the evacuation of the port as the weather (northeast wind up to force 8) does not permit transfer of the seaworthy boats.
d) In the forenoon of 29 October two empty naval ferry barges are to be transferred from Theodosia to Ivan Baba and to be placed at the disposal of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla; if necessary, take naval ferry barges (mines). Intended minelaying assignment "S 73" is canceled.
e) Naval ferry barges from the patrol service in the Kerch Strait take over the rest of the cargo after arrival in Theodosia.
f) The last naval ferry barge to leave Theodosia is to foul the harbor entrance with 49 FMC mines available there. Preparations are to be made immediately.
g) The scheduled minelaying assignments in the Kerch Straits in front of Cape Chauda and between Chauda and Tusla (K 15 and K 16, 60 mines each) can no longer be carried out, since the minelaying material has not yet arrived in Kerch because of delays in railway transportation.

4.) Orders to Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea, that on account of the release of keyword "Michael 2" minelaying assignment S 47 is canceled.

5.) Commander, 1st Landing Craft Flotilla is ordered to prepare 4 naval ferry barges each on 29 October and 30 October to transport away from Sevastopol to Constantza the first and second partial staffs of Admiral, Black Sea. Landing out of the convoys will be ordered by Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea. The freight capacity of the naval ferry barges is to be used for other additional cargoes.

6.) Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla is ordered to place 2 fully operational boats of the 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla at the disposal of Admiral, Black Sea in Sevastopol immediately. Commander, Convoys and Escorts is informed that the rest of the boats is placed at the disposal of Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea for convoy escort.

7.) Orders to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine regarding employment of the naval land units after the intended evacuation of Genichesk; accordingly, the land units of the Navy are as far as possible to be placed at the disposal of the local combat commander.

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On the night of 27/28 October 10 5-ton trucks are on the way to Genichesk to transport off the naval personnel. The naval land units are to walk as far as Shonkoi, where they are to be divided into a company ready for action and a group to be transported off. While the latter group is to go to Nikolaiev by train, the company ready for action assembles in Oshakudu, 15 km south of Ishonkoi.

The 44th Army Corps places three batteries of the 614 Gunnery Detachment under the command of the 336th Infantry Division for protection of the Chongar Peninsula with the agreement of the 17th Army High Command.

8.) According to the schedule for "Michael 2", March and the eastern shore of the Kerch Strait will be evacuated on the evening of 29 October. Accordingly, it will be necessary that the naval ferry barges that are to transfer from the Sea of Azov to the Black Sea in accordance with my previous decision, pass the Kerch Straits at a time when both shores are in enemy hands already. Despite the great risk I should attempt the breakthrough in order to safe the boats, but for the bad weather: With wind force 6 in squalls up to force 8, and passage against the swell, it may be assumed with certainty that the naval ferry barges, if they can stand the passage at all, will arrive in front of the Kerch Strait with heavy losses, which, apart from the delay, will further reduce the operational readiness of the boats. As on the other hand the crews are urgently required for reinforcement of the land defense, particularly with regard to the uniform replacement of forces, I order postponement of the naval ferry barges when Genichesk is evacuated.

Thus for my decisions and orders after the Army had released the Kerch, the main short-term evacuation of the Crimea on account of the military situation on the command of Army Group South and of the 6th Army.

At about 2000 the Army issued an order according to which release of the Kerch was recalled and the evacuation of the Crimea was postponed. Thereupon I transmitted the following orders by radio message on all waves:

"To All: Evacuation of the Crimea is stopped. All naval units to remain at their stations.

Commander-in-Chief, Black Sea."

In my opinion the cancelling of the orders for the evacuation of the Crimea issued by Commander in Chief, 17th Army High Command, was caused by a Fuehrer directive, according to which the Crimea is to be defended and to be held with all means because of its military and geographical situation, its political importance (particularly with respect to foreign policy), its economical importance, and last not least because of its importance for naval strategy.

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The orders I had decreed at noon only as far as they had not been carried out yet, were recalled by telephone immediately. The acting Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine, could be reached still in Genichesk, as the time of evacuation was postponed at the last moment. However, destruction of the naval ferry barges had already been carried out at that time.

At the time of the issue of the counter-orders the engines of the naval ferry barges had been destroyed to such an extent that transfer to Kerch even with improvement of the weather, was no longer possible so that destruction had to be rendered complete.

Preparations for the demolition of the mole and port installations made in Kerch on the part of the Army had caused the local naval command posts, too, to take similar measures for the demolition of the remaining harbor-defense boats, so that at the moment when the order for the evacuation of the Crimea was recalled from here, even these boats had been destroyed too.

On the night of 27/28 October boats on patrol off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula between Cape Chauda and Kyz Kul in the Kerch Strait and in the Sea of Azov between the Biriuchi peninsula and the Arabatskaia headland had no encounter with the enemy and returned to their bases without special incidents.

On the night of 28/29 October weather did not permit patrol off the Kerch peninsula. In the future, patrol in the Sea of Azov will be discontinued on account of the destruction of the group of naval ferry barges in Genichesk.

Enemy Air Activity:

Late in the afternoon and in the evening hours several air attacks on Kerch, Theodosia, Yalta, Alushta, Sevastopol and Sudak; numerous bombs were dropped. Noteworthy damage or casualties have been reported.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping assignments could not be carried out on account of the weather. Only over the Du several check sweeps without success.

Supply Traffic:

Weather did not permit resumption of convoys along the Crimean coast and in the western Black Sea. Salvage of LCF 135 which ran aground in front of Theodosia harbor could not be begun yet because of the weather.

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Situation and Enemy Situation:

Daylight reconnaissance did not sight any enemy shipping in the Western and central Black Sea. 1 1500-ton freighter, course west, off the Turkish coast in the area of Orku. At 0630 1 destroyer, 1 what was presumed to be a tanker and 2 armed small vessels were detected 45 miles west of Suchum.

Shipping in port:

Tuapse: 9 motor minesweepers, 5 MTBs, 33 naval landing boats, 3 1500-ton freighters, 5 coastal vessels, and 22 boats.

Gelendjik: 6 motor minesweepers and 11 M.T.B.s, 3 tugs, 5 naval landing boats, 4 coastal vessels, also numerous small ships and boats, which could not be identified clearly because of clouds. 3 motor minesweepers and 2 naval landing boats in front of the harbor.

13 motor minesweepers and 13 small vessels off Anapa. No enemy shipping was observed in the port of Anapa.

Ships in port:

Taman: 9 naval landing craft, 4 M.G.B.s, 5 M.T.B.s, 5 tugs for naval landing boats, 2 small armed vessels and 11 boats.

Glukoi Canal: (Kerchuk): 23 M.G.B.s, 4 M.T.B.s, 17 pontoon ferries, 1 coastal vessel, 5 tugs, 4 naval landing boats and 25 small boats.

Primorsko: 2 M.G.B.s and 90 boats.

Yeisk: 5 M.G.B.s, 1 M.T.B., 21 naval landing boats, 4 small armed vessels, 4 coastal vessels.

Mariupol: 3 coastal vessels and 30 boats.

Berdiansk: 1 small armed vessel, 4 coastal vessels and 60 small boats.

Main Naval D/F Station reported in the afternoon that striking radio silence was observed in the area of the enemy naval forces. This was the first time that no activity of small vessels whatsoever was detected in radio traffic. In the evening hours the enemy fleet resumed normal faint radio traffic. However, it was not found out whether large vessels were at sea; only 1 destroyer in the southeastern Black Sea. For the rest, activity of M.T.B.s and motor minesweepers as usual. At about midnight Main Naval D/F Station reported that cruiser KUIBYSHEV might be expected at sea about in the area of Batum.

2 of the 5 submarines at sea in the area west of the Crimea and in the northwestern Black Sea the previous day were detected in radio traffic.

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Between 1900 and 2000 Radar Station at Cape Chersonesus detected several objectives about 10 to 15 miles off Cape Chersonesus and Khersonitz.

Own Situation:

Naval Staff issued a directive emphasizing the necessity to hold the Crimea, on account of its vital importance for the defense of the Balkans; this required from each individual man full initiative during the battle for that strategically important target; thereupon I issued the following teletype to all naval shore commands, port commands, flotillas and port commanders:

"After the Fuehrer has again ordered the holding of the Crimea, I expect from all units at sea and on land most tenacious initiative, highest alertness and full defensive readiness with all weapons against enemy landing attempts. Partial evacuation and transport away of all dispensible material, equipment and personnel is to be continued as scheduled.

Commanding Admiral, Black Sea."

Weather forecast for Supatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Winds Northeast force 5 to 4, in the afternoon decreasing to force 3 - 4, fair, visibility 20 miles.

The night of 28/29 October passed quietly. Weather did not permit activity of E-boats and patrol.

On 27 October E-boat escort ship [redacted] had been ordered to load 4 U-boat torpedoes lying in Sevastopol the equipment of the torpedo maintenance unit; she reported the order to have been carried out.

Commander, 1st Landing Craft Flotilla in Sevastopol was ordered to prepare 2 naval ferry barges each to transport off the partial staff of Admiral, Black Sea and the Fortress Engineer Company to Constantza on 30 October. The freight capacity was to be used for additional cargo.

Loading should be completed by 1500 on 30 October. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was ordered to have the about 3000 life vests lying in Sevastopol transported to Sevastopol at the first occasion, so as to dispose of these vests in case of the evacuation of troops.

Commander, 30th Minor Minesweeper Flotilla should transfer the 3 naval ferry barges (mines) and 3 minesweepers (M) from Balaklava to Theodosia on the evening of 29 October, to carry out minelaying assignment G 73 in the Kerch Bay on 30 October. The boats put to sea from Balaklava at 1830 as scheduled. The 1st Landing Craft Flotilla reported that F 126 ran aground when transporting off the narrow-gage field railway from Khersonnes and was pushed high up to the land by the wind. So far attempts at towing off were in vain.

The 1st E-boat Flotilla was ordered to hasten loading of these boats with all available G7a torpedoes. 2 naval ferry barges are scheduled to arrive in Ivan Baba in the forenoon of 30 October for partial evacuation of this base; as they were no longer needed during the next few months. The torpedoes were to be shipped to Constantza.

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All G-7-a torpedoes should remain in Ivan Baba. Motor vehicles, as far as longer needed there, should be sent by land to the base of Constantza under command of one officer; transport space should be utilized fully for the evacuation of material.

Only valuable material, no longer needed there, should be transported away by naval ferry barges and trucks. The operational readiness of the flotilla must not be impaired by evacuation transports.

As the weather did not permit the intended minelaying in front of Tuapse, the 1st E-boat Flotilla was ordered to deliver the mines in Ivan Baba and to take in again reserve torpedoes.

Thus far no operations were proposed for the night of 29/30 October. 3 boats in immediate readiness from 2100 to 0200.

MFP 135 run a round in front of the harbor of Theodosia on 27 October, could be towed off in the course of the day.

On the night of 29/30 October 4 naval ferry barges were to put to sea from Theodosia at 1610 for patrol between Cape Chauda and Kys Aul.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus and Port Command, Kerch were ordered not to send out naval ferry barges for patrol in the Kerch Strait until further notice.

The naval ferry barges were to remain at first in Kerch to carry out minelaying assignments; they were to be dispersed in the harbor and to be camouflaged as far as possible.

The order that contrary to my previous intentions patrol in the Kerch Strait should be discontinued was caused by a report of Naval Shore Cdr. Caucasus, according to which the Army had asked not to combine patrol any longer, since the batteries along the Kerch Strait had been ordered to open fire at all vessels.

U-boat Situation:

U 23 reported that 3 fishermen were captured about 12 miles south of Poti on 25 October. On 29 October a 3000-ton steamer was sighted behind the dock of Suchum during reconnaissance of the harbor.

Minesweeping Activity:

Several check sweeps of minesweeping planes over the Beresanski Canal without success.

6 motor minesweepers put to sea from Sevastopol for minesweeping, however, they broke off their operation on account of the weather.

Supply Traffic:

Only slight escort traffic on account of the weather. Weather delayed the convoy from Sevastopol to Constantza by 24 hours.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Daylight reconnaissance did not sight any enemy shipping in the entire Black Sea and Sea of Azov.

Ships in Port:

Novorossisk: 4 naval landing boats, 3 tugs, 2 armed small vessels, and 6 boats.

Anapa: 11 motor minesweepers and 3 M.T.B.s, 36 naval landing boats, 11 tugs, 6 small armed vessels and 15 small boats.

Taman: 5 naval landing boats and 8 M.T.B.s

Gelendshik: 7 motor minesweepers, 10 M.T.B.s, 21 naval landing boats, 1 tug, 4 small armed vessels, 11 coastal vessels, 1 lighter, and 35 boats. In front of the harbor: 1 small patrol boat, 2 motor minesweepers and 3 coastal vessels.

Poti: 1 battleship, 2 large cruisers and 1 cruiser hull, 2 destroyers and 1 destroyer in dock, 1 torpedo boat, 1 minesweeper, 8 submarines, 9 M.T.B.s, and 9 motor minesweepers. Also 1 tanker (7000 tons), 1 8500-ton passenger ship, 13 freighters and 36 coastal vessels and lighters totalling about 46,000 tons and 15 small boats.

Batum: could not be reconnoitered so that it cannot be determined in how far changes and transfer of ships have taken place.

Ships in the ports of the Sea of Azov:

Glukoi Canal (Temriuk): 23 M.G.B.s, 7 M.T.B.s, 6 small armed vessels, 17 pontoon ferries, 1 coastal vessel, 1 paddle steamer and 15 boats.

Ssenaia: 10 M.T.B.s, 3 coastal vessels and 2 M.G.B.s.

Kuchuri: 10 boats partly beached.

Achtanisovska Canal: 6 coastal vessels and 6 boats, partly beached.

Main Naval D/F Station reported that the radio picture revealed in the forenoon moderate, later decreasing activity of M.T.B.s off the East coast of the Black Sea. 5 submarines were located in the area west and southwest of the Crimea and in the northwestern Black Sea, 1 further submarine with unknown position.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Novorossisk: Winds northeast force 3 - 4, during the night 3 - 2, fair, visibility 15 miles, fog patches.

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German Naval Command, Constantza was ordered to render ready for passage with utmost speed all comissioned ships and boats who have not yet been reported ready for action (such as UJ 101, 102). Lengthy training, especially special training must be renounced. That measure seemed to be necessary, so as to dispose of as many ships as possible for all events (evacuation and intensified supply).

If there should be no use for these ships, training may be continued.

Admiral, Black Sea, Dockyard Control Staff was ordered to hurry with all means all short repairs to war vessels and to put aside temporarily all lengthy repairs (more than 14 days) and new constructions. Repairs were to be carried out only as far as necessary to restore readiness to sail.

Commander, 1st Landing Craft Flotilla was ordered to sent out 6 fully operational naval ferry barges from Sevastopol to Theodosia on the afternoon. These naval ferry barges were to be placed at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus for coast patrol inside the Kerch Strait and off the South coast between Cape Chauda and Takil. On the evening of 31 October Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus sent out the naval ferry barges laden with evacuation goods for Sevastopol. The naval ferry barges (mines) 419 and 447 were to remain at first in Theodosia.

As scheduled the 6 naval ferry barges put to sea from Sevastopol for Theodosia at 1745.

At 1230 the 1st group of motor minesweepers and 3 naval ferry barges (mines) coming from Balaklava put into Theodosia.

At 1255 and 1315 2 heavy air attacks on Theodosia by 9 and 11 planes respectively; numerous bombs and machine gun fire. In the course of the first attack 1 harbor defense boat sprang a leak and sank; direct hit on tanker SWOY STONE (but still capable of floating). Aboard F 419 2 men killed, 2 wounded by spray effect; 2 further wounded aboard a motor minesweeper (M). Several buildings were damaged. One IL 2 was shot down.

On the night of 29/30 October nothing to report from patrol in the Kerch Strait. 4 naval ferry barges that had operated off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula put in again to Theodosia at 0700.

On the night of 30/31 October the same patrol should be carried out by 3 naval ferry barges (the fourth is not ready to sail).

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to have at least 6 naval ferry barges carry out patrol between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil from 31 October if weather permits. Should special signs indicate enemy landing intentions and during nights particularly favorable for any such attempts all naval ferry barges lying in Theodosia were to be sent into operation. The naval ferry barges on patrol will be divided into three groups of 2 boats each; the western and central group were to put in again to Theodosia at dawn, while the eastern group should anchor during daylight under cover of the coast between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil or north of it as far as about Yanish Takil dependent on the weather, if possible within the range of our own guns for anti-aircraft protection.

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The patrol lines were to prevent enemy landings (any enemy forces approaching the coast were to be attacked with all weapons) and to warn the coast in due time of the approach of enemy vessels.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was further ordered to transfer 4 harbor defense boats from Tuapse to Kerch and to send these boats into operation from the Kerch base for coastal defense within the Kerch Strait.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, was ordered:

Naval ferry barges will carry out patrol in the Kerch Strait immediately.

Reasons for the temporary abandoning of patrol in the Kerch Strait as given in yesterday's war diary, are recalled, as it turned out in the course of a discussion between Commander in Chief, 17th Army High Command and me that coastal protection is urgently desired. I was assured that our craft will not be fired on. Furthermore, Commander in Chief and I agreed in the opinion that patrol in the northern part of the Kerch Strait between Yenikale and Kossa Chuchka is of no use, as on account of the narrowness of the channel the boats would have to remain closely offshore anyhow, so that timely preliminary warning would be impossible, moreover, the boats could greatly hamper our own defensive fire.

On this occassion I told Commander in Chief that in view of the present continuous bad weather I consider a landing of small boats at the "bottleneck" of Tuapse were unlikely; much more probable appears to be an attempt to cross the narrowest place of the Kerch Strait between Kossa Chushka and the area of Yenikale following adequate softening up with gunfire. (Command of the total artillery including Army Coast Artillery and naval coast artillery within the total Kerch Strait as an "extended river" is in the hands of the Army in accordance with the orders of Commander in Chief, 17th Army High Command - Commanding General, Army).

At 2030 3 naval ferry barges put to sea from Kerch for patrol in the Kerch Strait as scheduled.

In the course of the day several air attacks and further enemy gunfire against the batteries along the Kerch Strait; an artillery bunker was destroyed, another burnt down.

The 1st E-boat Flotilla was ordered to send 3 boats into action against enemy shipping traffic along the Caucasus coast between Gholenjik and Tuapse, concentrating on Idokopass, on the night of 30/31 October.

2 boats were in immediate readiness from 2200 to 0300, to repulse, if necessary, enemy attacks against the Crimean coast.

3 E-boats put out from Ivan Baba at 1600 as scheduled, however, weather forced them to turn back at 1830; they put in again to Ivan Baba at 1900. (Outside of the cover of the coast high swell and with rapidly freshening winds sea force 4. The boats cut deep into the sea and took in much water, so that further passage with a speed of 28 miles was questionable; according to the opinion of the flotilla commander no improvement of the weather was to be expected.)

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The evacuation of Genichesk carried out in the foreman rendered necessary the following measures:

1) Naval Gunnery Detachment 641:

a) 4th battery (four 10cm one field howitzer) will remain in position on the Arabatskaia headland and will be reinforced by 15cm heavy field howitzer from the 2nd battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614.
b) Commander and staffs of the 2nd and 3rd battery will transfer to the area of Chongar and are subordinated to the 336th Infantry Division.
c) 1st battery (four 15cm heavy field howitzers) were shipped aboard E-boats via Dshankoi to Armiansk (Perekop Straits). Owing to a misunderstanding on the part of thw railroad station traffic officer of Armiansk the battery was transported by rail to Kherson.
d) 5th battery (three 7.62cm rapid firing guns) and all equipment were shipped to Eupatoria by E-boats. The battery was equipped with four 7.62 cm field guns and put into action again.

2) From crews of the naval landing craft (guns) and naval ferry barges, and from the personnel of the port command and of Group Haecker was formed a naval battalion under command of Commander Stiege; it is designated by the Army as Naval Battalion 320. Part of that troop was left on the Arabatskaia headland, while the greater part joined the Army for the defense on land.

Commanding General, Army Area A reported that upon orders from the High Command, Army Group A all available forces were to be engaged in the Dniepr position; accordingly he sent out 375 men from the Nikolaiev naval personnel to the Dniepr. Thereupon I replied that in the case of emergency I am willing to assist with naval forces.

U-boat Situation:

After completion of routine dockyard repairs U 19 proceeded from Galatz to Sulina and should proceed further to Constantza in order to be equipped there for operations against the enemy.

At 0930 U 18 put in to The Dosia. The commander received the latest data on minefields and patrol positions off Batum and was instructed for its special assignment off the Batum road. The task was rendered very difficult by protection of the total deep channel with what is presumed to be a torpedo net barrage; never the less, it was to be tried, if possible by underfiring of the net.

At 1350 U 18 put out from The Dosia to carry out the operation.

At 2200 U 9 reported: "29 October at 2130 tanker, 3000 tons, Air Force grid square 9414, heavy detonation, probably hit, ask whether [illegible] shall be laid."

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The boat had thus attacked the tanker reported by our air reconnaissance at 0600 in Air Force grid square 0330 with double shot; apparently the hit was heard only. Photographic reconnaissance of shipping in Tuapse was difficult on account of lack of planes and quite impossible at that time.

U 23 reported arrival in Theodosia in the forenoon of 31 October to take in more supplies, it was ordered to take in supplies as quickly as possible after arrival in Theodosia because of air-raid danger.

U 9 should investigate at first the place of torpedoing and wait for further orders.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping planes swept for mines over the Danube without result.

FZ boats swept for ground mines off Sevastopol with towed loop gear.

Several check sweeps without success.

Motor minesweepers broke off minesweeping off Sevastopol on account of the weather.

The Beresanski Canal was closed from the entrance because mines were suspected to have been dropped.

Supply Traffic:

The proposed convoys were carried out as scheduled without special events to report.

The 17th Army High Command was given detailed evacuation transports by sea with the available shipping space (see appendix).

State of the Radar Organization:

The following radar stations (surface watching radar set) presently mounted are ready for operation: Cape Chroni, Cape Ili, Cape Meganom, Cape Aitodor and Sevastopol North. The specially vital set at Cape Takil (southern entrance of the Kerch Strait) was non-operational, as the personnel of the Radar Station removed the most vital parts from the instrument and transported them back in accordance with the basic orders of Communications Officer, Admiral Black Sea, after the Army forces at the Kerch Strait had evacuated the coastal sector already on 27 October and had carried out destructions. Orders for repair were given immediately. It remained to be seen whether that was possible. Respective the 8 radar sets newly arrived in the area, it was ordered as follows: The sets destined for Cape Chauda were to be brought in field position with utmost speed and to be prepared for operation. The set destined for Sevastopol North was to be shipped to Constantza by sea.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Reconnaissance did not establish any enemy shipping in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. The Turkish passenger ship [illegible] (4,026 tons), course east, was sighted off the Turkish coast 8 miles northeast of Inebolu. About 12 miles northwest of Inebolu a 4,000-ton freighter, also on easterly course. A Turkish 1,500-ton freighter on the road of Inebolu.

Photographic reconnaissance of the Black Sea ports revealed the following:

Tuapse: 1 torpedo-boat, 3 minesweepers, 8 motor minesweepers, 6 E-boats; 4 of them beached, 5 small armed vessels, 34 pontoon ferries, 1 7,000-ton tanker, 1 1,500-ton tanker, 2 freighters totalling 2,200 tons, 2 lighters, 5 coastal vessels and 25 boats.

Sochi: 3 motor minesweepers, 3 on slip, 12 boats.

Weather did not permit reconnaissance of the remaining ports of the Caucasus coast and Sea of Azov. Main Naval D/F station Eupatoria reported that in the morning 4 M.T.B.s and in the afternoon destroyer GUSTAV were detected in radio traffic in the northern to central part of the East Coast of the Black Sea. 1 M.T.B. and 1 minesweeper were established in the southern part and 2 submarines in the operational area of the northwestern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Weather forecast from Eupatoria to Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: northeast wind, force 5-6, after midnight decreasing to force 4, mostly fair, visibility 15 miles, early haze.

As the Crimea is to be defended until the last I issued the following additional order to supplement my corresponding orders to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus of 29 October:

"The Crimea is to be held with all means. Consequently the ordered transport away of material is recalled. Partial evacuation may be carried out only to an extent as had been ordered before the orders for evacuation of material had been given. The naval ferry barges loaded in Theodosia and Kerch and ready for transport off are to be examined accordingly and to be unloaded, if necessary. It is to be reported what naval ferry barges are then still required for evacuation to Sevastopol".

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Danube Delta, reported that effective immediately the channel from Odessa to Ochakov, closed previously because of mine danger, was opened again. Commander, in charge of convoys, Black Sea was ordered to have naval ferry barges not fully ready for action control temporarily the channel to Nikolaiev. Definite arrangements by assignment of craft for that purpose is not possible until after the general situation has cleared up.

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At 1234 a convoy proceeding from Sevastopol to Constantza was attacked by torpedo planes with 3 torpedoes 35 miles east of St. George. One man slightly wounded by machine gunfire; otherwise no casualties.

Port Captain, Skadovsk reported that the sector commander of the Army had ordered evacuation of Skadovsk for the same evening, after individual Russian forces had penetrated as far as Perekop. Harbor and shelters were destroyed. The unit was to withdraw to Kinburn-skoi on the night of 31 October/1 November.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was ordered to hurry transfer back of NFPs 342, 559, 573 and 594 from Constantza to Sevastopol. The naval ferry barges should be used for urgent transports.

Craft on patrol off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula and within the Kerch Strait on the night of 30/31 October had no engagement with the enemy.

On the night of 31 October/1 November 6 naval ferry barges, divided into three groups, should patrol the line off the south coast of the Kerch peninsula between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil. The boats should put to sea from Theodosia at 1755. Simultaneously 3 harbor defense boats were to join the eastern group as far as Cape Takil and to proceed from there independently, in order to be used for patrol within the Kerch Strait in the future. These harbor defense boats should fire distress signals in Theodosia Bay and return to Theodosia escorted by naval ferry barges.

3 naval ferry barges were on patrol within the Kerch Strait as scheduled (the fourth boat is not yet ready for operation). The boats put to sea from Kerch at 1630.

Naval Gunnery Detachment 613 reported that 3 enemy M.T.B.S coming from Taman passed the Kerch Strait in southern direction at 1153. The 2nd, 3rd, 7th and 10th battery opened fire immediately, whereupon the boats laid a smoke screen, and directed heavy gunfire against the 2nd and 3rd batteries. One man of the 2nd battery seriously wounded. At 1215 3 further M.T.B.s came into sight in the Taman Bay; they entered the Kerch Strait from the south off the Taman coast at 1300.

The 1st E-Boat Flotilla received the following orders for the night of 31 October/1 November:

3 boats carried out operations off the south coast of the Caucasus, concentrating on the area off Tuapse. 2 boats were in immediate readiness in Ivan Baba from 2200 to 0300. The 1st E-Boat Flotilla was informed that U 23 would put to sea from Theodosia in direction for Tuapse at 1500 and anti-submarine patrol was prohibited for the 1st E-Boat Flotilla; furthermore, that 6 naval ferry barges would be in patrol between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil on the night of 31 October/1 November.

Some time ago 30 7.62 cm field guns arrived in the Ordnance Depot of Sevastopol; they had been requested recently to serve as alarm guns for the defense of landing in the coastal batteries. These guns were distributed as follows:

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1) 4 guns to the 3rd battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614, whose 3 7.5 cm guns were not operational. (Presently Chonkar peninsula - northern Crimea).

2) 4 guns to the 5th battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614, whose 7.6cm pivot guns could not be mounted for lack of time and manpower. (will be used at the Perekop Strait).

3) 6 guns to Cape Chauda. Gun crew will be detached from the personnel ordered there for the construction of naval batteries.

4) 15 guns were placed at the disposal of the 17th Army High Command. The original intention, to man these 15 guns with crews from Naval Battalion 320 (Commander Stiege) was given up, as the attempt to withdraw the battalion from the Crimea had failed. Frustration of that attempt was attributed to the fact that the Perekop Strait was closed. The battalion was allowed now to march on to Cherson. (The 17th Army High Command had chosen the designation "Naval Battalion 320" for the time of the engagement of the battalion).

U-Boat Situation:

Theodosia: At 0745 U 23 returned from an operation against the enemy to take in more supplies.

Extract from the brief report: Operational area between Ochemchiri and Poti was reached on 15 October. 2 steamers under cover of the coast could not be attacked because of too great a range; the boat followed up and caught them in the area of Cape Kodor after nightfall. Convoy comprising 2 about 3000-ton freighters and 3 motor minesweepers. After the third emerged approach hit foreship 10 on the first steamer, after gunfire and depth charges only listing of the ship, sinking not observed. On 16 October thrust to the Sukhum road, only small craft.

On 22 October when off the Chopi mouth the boat sighted 4 large steamers on the river. On 23 October southern entrance of Poti: 1000-ton coastal freighter anchored, sunk by single shot. On 25 October fishing vessel sunk, 3 fishermen captured. On 29 October 3000-ton steamer was sighted behind a sunken floating dock in Sukhum, could not be attacked as totally covered by the dock, possibly beached.

Miscellaneous: Air reconnaissance and patrol reduced, little traffic along the coast, partly even offshore.

The boat was ordered to take in more supplies as quickly as possible and to put to sea again the same day.

U 24 was ordered to return to Constantza and was given sailing instructions for reconnaissance in the eastern Black Sea. The boat was ordered to proceed on a course far away from and parallel to the coast, as one has got the impression that recently the valuable enemy ships take the same course. Intention: To complete general overhauling of the boat before onset of the ice period, so as to dispose of the boat again by the end of December.

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At 1640 U 23 put to sea from Theodosia for another 7-day operation in the operational area north of Kuapse. At 2132 U 24 reported:

"At 1637 in Air Force grid square 0472 underwater single shot at a stopped 100-ton escort vessel, hit likely. Commenced return".

At 2235 the same boat reported: "Convoy of tankers in Air Force grid square 0474 course south, medium speed" and kept up contact. It was probable that this was the 1500-ton tanker detected in radio traffic the same day and of whose presence in Kuapse all boats had been informed.

Enemy Air Activity:

At about 2130 air attack on Sevastopol in two waves; several bombs were dropped on the harbor installations. No damage reported. At the same time bomb attack at sea about 10 - 12 miles south of Tuapse. Bombs were not observed to have been dropped.

Further air attacks were directed against Theodosia and Kerch. One plane was shot down in Theodosia. In general, no damage to naval installations. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported one gun of the 2nd battery of Naval Gunnery Detachment 613 not fully operational.

Own Intentions:

After the Air Force in the command of the 4th Air Force had been reinforced, the 4th Air Force was again asked to carry out air attacks against concentration of craft in the Anapa harbor, and if possible, to extend these even to Taman and Yenaia, as in all these harbors strong concentration of landing craft and light naval forces had been established.

Minesweeping Activity:

Despite very unfavorable weather 7 boats of the 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla carried out minesweeping in the area of Sevastopol. The boats put in Sevastopol at 1630 to take in more equipment and buoys.

Supply Traffic:

In general the convoys along the south coast of the Crimea and in the western Black Sea proceeded as scheduled without special incidents, except for the convoy proceeding from Sevastopol to Constantza, which was ineffectively raided by two enemy planes 35 miles east of St. George; it has arrived meanwhile at its destination.

Offensive Activity in October 1943:

A) a) Enemy attacks:

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Offensive activity in October 1943: (Cont'd)

1) 2 submarine attacks on conveys.
Damage: 1 naval ferry barge sunk by torpedo hit.
2) Air attacks:

a) 52 heavy attacks on ports and bases with bombs and machine guns,
b) 14 attacks on conveys and naval forces with bombs, aerial torpedoes and aerial mines,
c) 32 attacks on patrol lines off the north and south coast of Taman.

3) Planes shot down:

a) 6 by naval ferry barges
b) 5 by fighter escort to conveys
c) 6 by anti-aircraft guns

Ad b) Own Offensive Activity:

1) 5 U-boats carrying out offensive operations against the enemy fleet off the Caucasus coast, 1 of them homeward bound.
2) 1 of E-boat Flotilla: 9 operations against enemy vessels lying in the harbor and road of Anapa and against enemy supply traffic off the Caucasus coast; 3 remote escorts of large conveys along the Crimean coast.
3) Motor minesweepers: 2 patrol operations in the southern entrance of the Kerch Strait, 6 offensive minelaying operations in the Kerch Strait and Theodosia Bay, arrangements for minelaying, continuous minesweeping activity.
4) Naval landing craft (guns) and naval ferry barges: 2 offensive operations for the bombardment of the enemy front on the northern and western coast of the Sea of Azov.
5) Continuous anti-submarine patrol on convey routes concentrating on the area west of the Crimean coast.
6) Naval landing craft (guns) and naval ferry barges continuously on patrol off the north coast of the Sea of Azov, south coast of the Kerch peninsula and in the Kerch Strait for the defense of enemy landing operations. During patrol frequent engagements with light enemy naval forces. The enemy was always repulsed.

Ad para b-1) to b-6):

1) U-boats sank:
1 coastal vessel of 1000 tons,
1 freighter of 2000 tons (not quite positive)
1 3000-ton tanker (torpedoed, investigation is going on)
2) submarine chaser sank:
1 submarine.

Ad c) Own Losses:

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Offensive activity in October 1943: (Cont'd)

Sunk by mines: 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug (name illegible); by torpedo hit: 1 naval ferry barge; by bombs: steamer [illegible], 3 lighters totalling 700 tons.

Sunk or destroyed by bad weather: 10 harbor defense boats, 3 Siebel ferries (harbor defense boats and Siebel ferries not ready to put to sea), as well as 1 tug, 3 lighters totalling 1150 tons. By our own demolitions during the evacuation of Genichesk: 4 naval ferry barges, 5 naval landing craft (guns), 9 harbor defense boats; also 3 harbor defense boats in Kerch.

Further partial evacuation and transport off of communication equipment from the Crimea: (see Appendix).

Appendix to War Diary Admiral Black Sea of 16 to 31 Oct. (re: 24 Oct. 1943).

Copy! 26 October 1943

Teletype: Very urgent With copy to: Admiral Black Sea

-Secret-

Agent's report on the Soviets from the beginning of October.

Landing intentions against the Crimea (transmitted by the General command, 1st Air Corps) extract):

1) The 17th Army Group Black Sea-Kuban is to complete by the end of October its preparations for a large-scale attack against the Kerch Peninsula. At first, operations are to be expected in the sector of Melitopol-Berdyansk against the Perekop Strait.

Should these attacks frustrate, Army Group Black Sea-Kuban is ordered to begin immediately the large-scale attack against Kerch and the Crimea.

2) Two bridgeheads shall be established on the Kerch Peninsula.
a) in the area of Yenikale
b) 10 - 15 km south of Kerch
c) 25 - 30 km south of Kerch
The following units are to be employed for that purpose: 4 rifle divisions, 4 rifle brigades, 1 mot rized division, 3 mot rized brigades, 3½ tank brigades, 6 mountain infantry regiments, 4 cavalry regiments, 7 artillery regiments, 6 miscellaneous regiments.

3) Simultaneously air landing troops and parachutists shall be landed on the roads leading to Kerch from the west and south-west.

4) Further bridgeheads shall be established on the south coast of the Crimea:

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a) near Beeidhout (5687), in direction to Parpatch (5681)
b) near The [illegible], in direction to the west via Vladislavovka (5676)
c) near Saudak (4526), in direction to Starii Krim (5677) and Karasubasar (4687),
d) near Alushta, in direction to Simferopol and Yalta.
Forces to be [illegible] for that purpose:

2 rifle divisions, 2 rifle brigades, 2 motorized brigades, 3 tank brigades, 10 rifle and mountain infantry regiments, 2 motorized regiments, 1 cavalry regiment, 10 artillery regiments and further independent rifle etc. regiments.

5) Altogether 42 freighters of 500 - 3000 tons each (total tonnage 56,000 tons) are available to ferry over these troops. Furthermore available 250 landing boats for 200 men each and 150 landing boats with a capacity of 60 men each.

Ferries totalling 2,000 tons are under construction.

Commander, Naval Air Black Sea 4211/43
Secret.

Appendix to War Diary of 16-31 Oct 1943.
(re: 31 Oct)

Admiral Black Sea
Ref. No. [illegible] 7062/43 AI

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Army High Command 17 - Operations Officer -
Post - Town

Subject: Evacuation by sea.

A) Loading facilities:

1) Sevastopol:

4 piers for large vessels
30 piers for naval ferry barges

2) Eupatoria

Berths for 3 naval ferry barges
and 1 lighter (from 4 Nov. loading points for another 8 naval ferry barges)

3) Ak Mechet

Berths for 3 naval ferry barges
In addition, there exists the possibility to load ships anchoring in the harbor of Sevastopol or on the roads of Eupatoria and Ak Mechet with crews by means of supply boats.

B) Total capacity of vessels:

1) 45.000 tons comprehending also: submarine chasers
minelayers
destroyers
gunboats
motor mineswepers

2) Ships whose operational readiness is dependent on the weather:

5,850 tons, i.e.:

5 auxiliary sailing vessels	altogether	1,000 tons
2 freight steam vessels	"	600 tons
50 naval ferry barges	"	4,250 tons

3) In addition, but really fraction only with favorable weather:

15 tugs
15 lighters totalling 12,000 tons

C) Time of Round Trip for passage from Sevastopol to Odessa or Constantza and back (4 days)

2) Trains of barges: 6 days.
It is to be taken into account that trains of barges are greatly dependent on the weather. To make better use of the capacity of the lighters it is suggested to take the route from Ak Mechet to Odessa, as it is considerably shorter.

D) Loading capacity of the total shipping space per round trip: 30,000 soldiers. With 7 round trips per month with 30,000 men each the monthly performance will be 210,000 men.

F) Attention is called to the fact that with the onset of fall weather the small vessels can normally no longer be used on many days, and delays of the steamer convoys must be taken into account, too.

For reasons of transport it might become necessary to divert part of the steamer convoys to Constantza. Loss of time will not ensue.

G) If it becomes necessary to hasten evacuation, transport performance in accordance with para D) can be raised considerably by embarking the troops closely together aboard the steamers. In that case the increased risk of the ships's losses due to enemy action must be taken into the bargain.

Signed: K i e s e r i t z k y

Appendix to War Diary of 16-31 Oct 1943.
(re: 31 Oct.).

Partial evacuation and transport away of communications equipment from stocks of the Naval Communications Battalions and Naval Communications Officers in the Crimea from 25 to 31 Oct:

On 25 October Communications Officer, Admiral Black Sea issued the following orders:

Teletype: "Secret"
To: Naval Communications Battalion Nikolaiev
with copy to: Naval Shore Command, Ukraine Nikolaiev
Communications Officer Rumania/Bulgaria, Constantza
Naval Communications Battalion Constantza
Sea Transportation Office Nikolaiev.

Orders: To effect partial evacuation, transfer as soon as possible to the Naval Communications Battalion in Constantza and as far as shipping space is available all communications equipment no longer needed, especially equipment short in supply as well as valuable test installations and workshop equipment. The same partial evacuation is ordered for the naval Communications Battalion Branch Offices of Simferopol and Theodosia.

Admiral Black Sea Orders 8974 .. IV

On the grounds of that order the branch office of the Naval Communications Battalion in Simferopol shipped 60% of the radio sets, additional radio sets, spare tubes and tools of daily use from Simferopol to Sevastopol and from those to Constantza.

The 91st Radar Company was ordered with letter Ref.No..Sh G 9060 Nafue dated 29 October to stop the installation of the radar Station Sevastopol II and to transfer the set from Sevastopol to Constantza.

On 26 October the Naval Communications Company 103 (Naval Communications officer Simferopol) transferred the heavy radio section M 306 (5 motor vehicles with trailers and one 28 KW.-aggregate car) to Sevastopol and from there to Constantza by ship. The same by the heavy radio section M 304 (5 motor vehicles with trailers and two 28-aggregate cars) as well as Radio Section 3 of Naval Communications Company 103 (800-watt short-wave transmitter and two 6.25 KW. aggregates) of the local radio station Simferopol were sent to Odessa via Nikolaiev with own power.

Except for one transmitter and one receiver the equipment of the Naval Radio Station Kerch was handed over to Naval Communications Battalion Simferopol and transferred from there to Constantza. Naval Communications Officer Kerch transferred his total radio equipment to Sevastopol except for 1 emergency transmitter (Ha 5 K 39 with reserve aggregate 1.25 KW.).

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Remarks of Naval Group Command South to War Diary Admiral Black Sea from 16 October 1943.

Re page 1431 cipher 1) last paragraph and page 1432 cipher 3) f):

Admiral Black Sea reports that mining of the harbors with MB mines etc. is intended and submitted a list of the required material.

Setting of the delayed action fuze and counting contact has to vary, if possible in such a manner that the harbors are rendered useless for a long time and minesweeping will afford much time.

Re page 1432 cipher 4):

It cannot be seen whether Commander, Convoys and Escorts has been ordered also to hurry transfer of shipping space for evacuation.

Ref page 1440 seventh paragraph:

Is not in accordance with Fuehrer Directive 40, shows however, that in times of danger the Army knows to maintain itself.

Ref page 1442, last paragraph, last sentence:

Equipment was not shipped to Constantza, Admiral, Black Sea reported on 13 November that the radar set from Sevastopol North is installed in Cape Fakil and is ready for operation since 7 November. The non-operational set from Cape Fakil was shipped to Constantza for repair.

For and on behalf of Naval Group Command South
Chief of Staff.

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